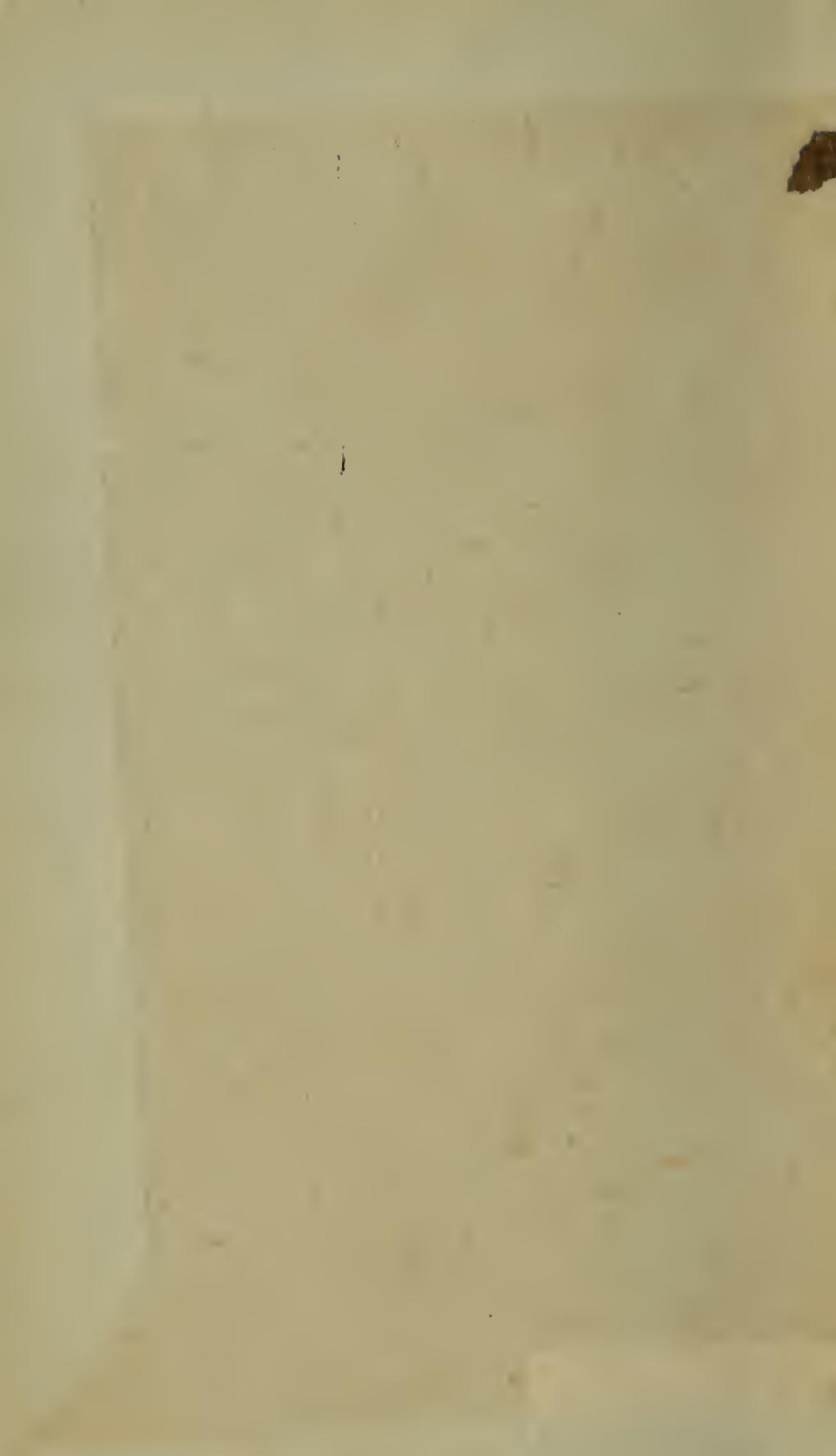


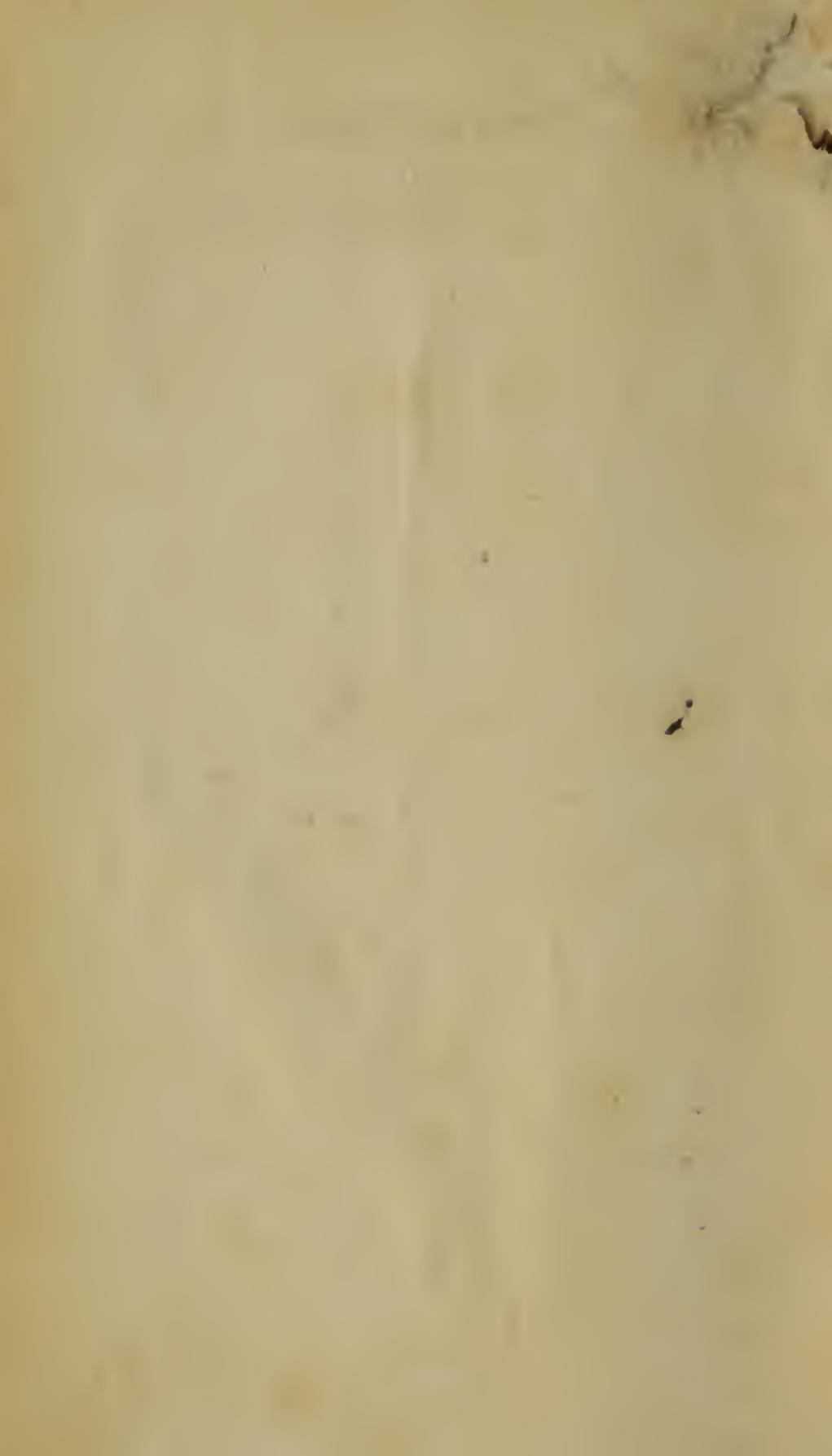


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PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE;

A

DRAMATIC ROMANCE.

IN TWO PARTS.

BY HENRY TAYLOR, Esq.

“Dramatica Poesis est veluti Historia spectabilis.”
BACON DE AUGMENTIS.

PART II.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

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Oh Lord, what is thys worldys blysse,
That changeth as the mone!
My somer's day in lusty May
Is derked before the none.

THE NOT-BROWNE MAYD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

(SECOND PART.)

MEN OF FLANDERS.

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE, *Regent of Flanders.*

PETER VAN DEN BOSCH.

VAUCLAIRE, } Officers of his in command at Ypres.
ROOSDYK, }

VAN RYK, } Officers in his camp before Oudenarde.
VAN MUCK, }

FATHER JOHN OF HEDA.

A PAGE of Van Artevelde's.

A FRIAR.

VAN STOCKENSTROM, } Citizens of Ypres.
VAN WHELK, }

THE BURGOMASTER AND DIVERS BURGESSES OF YPRES,
OFFICERS, MESSENGERS, &c.

MEN OF FRANCE.

KING CHARLES THE SIXTH.

THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY, *his uncle, and heir presumptive
to the Earl of Flanders.*

THE DUKE OF BOURBON, *also uncle to the king.*

SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE, *a Follower of the Duke of
Bourbon.*

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON, *Constable of France.*

SIR JOHN DE VIEU, *Admiral of France.*

THE LORDS OF SAIMPI, SANXERE, AND ST. JUST; SIR
RAOUL OF RANEVAL; THE LORD OF COUCY, AND
MANY OTHER LORDS AND KNIGHTS BELONGING TO
THE FRENCH KING'S COUNCIL.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET, *Clerk of the Council.*

WOMEN.

ELENA DELLA TORRE, *an Italian Lady.*

CECILE, *her Attendant.*

DAME VOORST, *a Woman of Ypres.*

The SCENE is laid sometimes in FLANDERS and sometimes in FRANCE.

“ I say, ye Commoners, why were ye so stark mad,
What frantyk frensy fyll in youre brayne ;
Where was youre wit and reason ye shuld have had,
What willfull foly made yow to ryse agayne
Yowre naturall lord ? ”

SKELTON.

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

Part the Second.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

AN ANTE-ROOM TO THE STATE APARTMENTS OF
THE GRAND JUSTICIAIRY IN THE ROYAL PALACE
AT SENLIS, IN FRANCE.

Several groups of suitors holding petitions in their hands. In front a yeoman of Tournesis, and near him SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLEE.

SIR FLEUREANT.

If I may be so bold, friend, whence art thou?
The times are stirring, and come whence thou may'st
Thou must bring news.

YEOMAN.

So please your worship's grace
I come from this side Tournay ; I am French,
And though I say it, sir, an honest yeoman.

SIR FLEUREANT.

And, honest yeoman, what's thine errand here ?

YEOMAN.

I have a suit, sir, to my noble lord
The Duke of Burgundy.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Why, what ?—what suit ?

YEOMAN.

'Tis but for justice, sir ; I crave but justice.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Hast thou the price of justice in thy pocket ?

YEOMAN.

Nay, sir, I am poor.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Poor, and want justice ?—where was thy mother's thrift
To bring thee up in such a poor estate,
And yet to lack such dainties ! Say wherein
Would'st thou be justified? who is't hath wronged thee ?

YEOMAN.

Last Wednesday, sir, a troop of Flemings, led

By fierce Frans Ackerman, the frontier passed
And burned my homestead, ravaged all my fields,
And did sore havoc in the realm of France.

SIR FLEUREANT.

What say'st thou? is it so? Go to—go to—
This is high matter. Thou'l be heard on this.

Enter USHER.

USHER.

Depart ye, sirs; his grace is with the king;
He bids you all depart and come to-morrow;
To-day his grace hath business with the king,
And will not be molested. Clear the chamber.
Their graces and the king are coming hither,
And would be private;—prithee, sir, depart.

(*To the YEOMAN, who lingers.*)

SIR FLEUREANT.

Take thou thy grievance to the outer hall,
But go no further hence. Soft, Master Usher;
My friend shall have an audience of the duke.
Look he be carefully bestowed without
Till he be called. He is an injured man;

An injured man, and being so, yet welcome.
The grief he hath is worth its weight in gold.
Bestow him carefully without.

USHER.

This way.

[*Exit, with the YEOMAN.*

*Enter THE DUKES OF BURGUNDY and BOURBON, in
close conference.*

BURGUNDY.

Good morrow, Flurry. Not on us, good brother.
I grant you were we rashly to make war,
No council summon'd, no estates convened,
Then aught that should unhappily ensue
Might chance be charged on us, as natural guides,
And so reputed, of the youthful king.
But, backed by all the council,—yea, by all,
For I'll be warranty no voice dissents,—
Backed by the council, wherein weighty reasons
Shall be well urged—

BOURBON.

Aye, brother, there it is !

That you have reasons no man doubts at all,
And Jacques Bonhomme will be bold to say

That reasons which are rank in Burgundy
Have been transplanted to the soil of France,
That fits them not.

BURGUNDY.

In Jacques Bonhomme's throat
I'll tell him that he slanders me and lies.
No soil in Christendom but fits my reasons ;
No soil where virtue, chivalry, and honour
Are fed and flourish, but shall fit them well.
When honour and nobility fall prone
In Flanders, think you they stand fast in France ?
Or losing ground in France, have hope elsewhere ?
This by no narrow bound is circumscribed :
It is the cause of chivalry at large.
Though heir to Flanders I am Frenchman born,
And nearer have at heart the weal of France
Than my far off inheritance. Go to ;
Lay we before the council the sad truth
Of these distractions that so rock the realm,—
Paris possessed by Nicholas le Flamand
Where law's a nothing and the king a name;
Armies with mallets but beginning there,
And gathering like the snow wreaths in a storm
Before a man hath time to get him hous'd,

At Chalons on the Marne, Champagne, Beauvoisin,
At Orleans, at Rheims, at Blois, and Rouen,
And every reach of road from Paris south :
Then point we to the North, where Artevelde
Wields at his single will the Flemish force,
Five hundred thousand swords ; and ask what fate
Awaits our France, if those with these unite,
Bold villains both, and ripe for riving down
All royalty,—thereafter or therewith
Nobility !—Then strike whiles yet apart
Each single foe.

BOURBON.

But Philip speaks us fair.

BURGUNDY.

As fair as false.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lords, there's proof of that
Here close at hand ; a yeoman from Tournesis,
But now arrived with news of ravage done
On the French frontier.

BURGUNDY.

There, good brother, there !
There's Flemish friendship, Flemish love of peace !
Shall we make nought of this ?

BOURBON.

We'll sift it, brother,

And find if it be true.

BURGUNDY.

Where is the man ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

I'll bring him in, my Lord.

[*Exit.*

Enter the KING with a Hawk on his hand.

BURGUNDY.

How now, my royal cousin, have you done ?

Can you repeat the speech ?

KING.

Oh yes, good uncle.

' Right noble our liege councillors all, We greet you !

We have required your—

BURGUNDY.

Presence here this day.

KING.

' We have required your presence here this day
On matters of high import, which surcharge
Our royal mind that still affects the weal
Of our beloved lieges. Much to peace
Our tender years incline us, but—but—but—'

I'll fly my hawk, good uncle, now ; to-morrow
I'll say the rest. Come, Jerry, Jerry, Jerry !
He is a Marzarolt, uncle, just reclaimed ;
The best in France for flying at the fur.
Whew ! Jerry, Jerry, Jerry !

BURGUNDY.

Cousin, stay.

Enter SIR FLEUREANT with the YEOMAN.

Here is a worthy yeoman from Tournesis,
Who hath a tale to tell of ravage done
Upon the realm of France.

KING.

A yeoman, uncle ?

Here, worthy yeoman, you shall kiss our hand.
Get off there, Jerry.

(*The YEOMAN kneels and kisses his hand.*)

BOURBON.

Now, sir, from what place
In France or Flanders, com'st thou ?

YEOMAN.

Please your Highness,
'Twas a small holding from my lord of Vergues
Close to the liberties of Fontenoy.

BOURBON.

This side the bourn ?

YEOMAN.

Three miles, my lord, and long ones.

BURGUNDY.

Three miles in France.

BOURBON.

And what befell thee there ?

YEOMAN.

My lord, my wife and I, on Wednesday night,
Saw fires to the north and westward, up by Oreq
And round to Beau-Renard, and knew by that
The Flemish commons had been there, that late
Have roamed through Flanders, burning where they came
The houses of the gentlemen and knights.
Then said my wife, (Pierilla, if it please you,)
'Tis well we're yeomen and of poor estate,
And that we're lieges of a mightier lord
Than was the Count of Flanders: 'tis God's mercy !
Or else might they that look from Beau-Renard
To the south and eastward, see this house on fire
To-morrow night, as we this night see theirs !'
But hardly had she said it, when due south
The sky was all on fire ; and then we knew

The Flemings were in France, and Auzain burned.
We fled away ; and looking back, beheld
Our humble dwelling flaming like a torch.
So, then, quoth I, we'll to my Lord the King,
And tell what's come to pass.

BURGUNDY.

Thou hast done well ;

Retire : His Majesty will bring thy case
Before the council. Hold thyself prepared
To tell thy story there.

[*Exit Yeoman.*

I think my royal cousin, though he's young,
Bears yet a mind too mettlesome to brook
Such wrongs as these. Your Majesty has heard :
The Flemish hordes lift plunder in your realm,
Driving your subjects from their peaceful homes,
Burning, destroying, wheresoe'er they reach,
And ever on nobility they fall
With sharpest tooth : let this have leave to grow,
And French insurgents shall from Flemish learn
The tricks of treason,—German boors from both ;
Till kings and princes, potentates and peers,
Landgraves, electors, palatines, and prelates,
Dukes, earls, and knights, shall be no more accounted

Than as the noblest and the loftiest trees,
Which, when the woodsman walks the forest through,
He marketh for the axe. Your Majesty,
When once you take the field, shall make brief work
With the base Flemings, and with one sharp blow
Cut short by the head some twenty thousand treasons
Hatched lately, so to say, beneath the wings
Of this Van Artevelde, which chipped the shell
Two months agone when Paris grew too hot
To hold us, and that now are fledged and entered.
I would your Majesty were now in arms,
Leading your gallant troops.

KING.

To morrow, uncle !

We will be armed and lead our troops to-morrow.
We'll ride the chestnut with the bells at his heels.
Let it be done to-morrow.

BOURBON.

Should the council
Declare for war, your force can not so soon
Be drawn together as your highness thinks,
Though it lies mainly hereabouts.

BURGUNDY.

No matter.

Speak boldly to the council as to us,
And if you'd presently be in the field
Be diligent to learn your speech—come in—
Both that you have and something I'll put to it
Touching this yeoman's grief—come in with me—
Ho ! take away this hawk—and you shall have it.

[*Exeunt DUKE OF BURGUNDY with the KING.*

BOURBON.

My brother, Fleureant, is all too hot
In this affair ; he's ever taking starts,
And leaving them that he should carry with him.
He'll fright the council from their calmer sense,
And drive them to some rash resolve.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord,

You shall perceive to-morrow at the board
How vast and voluble a thing is wit,
And what a sway a little of it hath
With councillors of state. My Lord of Burgundy
Will blaze and thunder through a three hours' speech,
And stamp and strike his fist upon the board,
Whilst casements rattling and a fall of soot
Shall threaten direful war.

BOURBON.

The constable,

The Earls of Ewe, and Blois, St. Poule, and Laval,
Guesclin, St. Just, the Seneschal of Rieux,
Raoul of Raneval,—all these, and more,
Are to my certain knowledge clean against him.
They deem a mission should be sent to Flanders
Before the sword be drawn, and with my will
Nought else shall come to pass.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Van Artevelde,

Though obstinate at times, is politic too,
And lacks not understanding ; he'll not brave
The wrath of France if he be well entreated.

BOURBON.

I spake with one last night who came from Bruges,
And on his way had sojourned in the camp
At Oudenarde, where, when the turbulent towns
Behind his back can spare him from their broils,
Van Artevelde o'ersees the leaguering force.
There was a market in the camp, he said,
And all things plentiful,—fruit, cheese, and wine,
All kinds of mercery, cloth, furs, and silks,

With trinketry, the plunder daily brought
By Van den Bosch's marauders. Went and came
All men that chose from Brabant, Hainault, Liege,
And Germany ; but Frenchmen were forbidden.
Van Artevelde, he said, in all things apes
The state and bearing of a sovereign prince ;
Has bailiffs, masters of the horse, receivers,
A chamber of accompt, a hall of audience,
Off gold and silver eats, is clad in robes
Of scarlet furred with minever, gives feasts
With minstrelsy and dancing night and day
To damsels and to ladies,—whom amongst
Pre-eminent is that Italian whore
Late domiciled with me, the girl Elena.
To Bruges in company with me she came,
Where waiting till on my return from Liege
I could rejoin her, to the conqueror's hands
She fell when Bruges was taken.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Soh, my Lord !

That lady hath a hook that twitches still.
If what I heard in Gascony be true
You claimed her from Van Artevelde in vain,
Who answered not your missives.

BOURBON.

True it is ;

And he shall answer for so answering not,
If any voice of potency is mine
Touching this war. But he may yet take thought
And make amends ; I'll send him once again
A message, and I know not who's so fit
To take it as thyself.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My Lord, my tongue
Can utter nought with so much grace by half
As what you bid it speak ; I'll bear your message.

BOURBON.

Not that for foolishness and woman's love
I would do this or that, but you shall note
My honour is impawned. Some half hour hence
Come to my chamber, where in privaey
We'll further speak of this ; and bring thou there
The yeoman of Tournesis ; he must learn
How to demean himself before the Council.
He has been tampered with, I nothing doubt,
And what he's tutored to must we unteach.
Things run too fast to seed.

[*Exit.*

SIR FLEUREANT.

What soldier's heart

By dotage such as his was e'er possessed
Upon a paramour ! To win her back
Peace, war, or any thing to him were good,
Nought evil but what works contrariwise.
And still his love goes muffled up for shame,
And masks itself with show of careless slights,
And giving her ill names of slut and jade,
Gipsy and whore.—The world's a masquerade,
And he whose wisdom is to pay it court
Should mask his own unpopular penetration,
And seem to think its several seemings real.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

THE FLEMISH CAMP BEFORE OUDENARDE.

*A platform in front of VAN ARTEVELDE's Tent.**Enter VAN ARTEVELDE and VAN RYK.*

VAN RYK.

You seem fatigued, my Lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Look to that horse ; he coughs—I think I am ;
The sun was hot for such a long day's ride.
What is the hour ?

VAN RYK.

The moon has not yet risen,
It cannot yet be nine.

ARTEVELDE.

Not nine ? well, well ;

‘ Be the day never so long,
At length cometh even-song.’

So saith the ancient rhyme. At eight o'clock
Or thereabouts, we crossed the bridge of Rosebecque.

VAN RYK.

’Twas thereabouts, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Tell me, Van Ryk,
Was anything of moment in your thoughts
As we were crossing.

VAN RYK.

In my thoughts, my lord ?
Nothing to speak of.

ARTEVELDE.

Well now it is strange !

I never knew myself to sleep o'horseback,
And yet I must have slept. The evening's heat
Had much oppressed me ; then the tedious tract
Of naked moorland, and the long flat road
And slow straight stream, for ever side by side,
Like poverty and crime—I'm sure I slept.

VAN RYK.

I saw not that you did, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

I did ;

Aye, and dreamed too. 'Twas an unwholesome
dream,
If dream it was—a nightmare rather : first
A stifling pressure compassed in my heart,
On my dull ears, with thick and muffled peal,
Came many a sound of battle and of flight,
Of tumult and distracted cries ; my own,
That would have been the loudest, was unheard,
And seem'd to swell the chambers of my brain
With volume vast of sound I could not utter.
The screams of wounded horses, and the crash
Of broken planks, and then the heavy plunge
Of bodies in the water—they were loud,
But yet the sound that was confined in me,

Had it got utterance, would have drowned them all !
But still it grew and swelled, and therewithal
The burthen thickened on my heart ; my blood,
That had been flowing freshly from my wounds,
Trickled, then clotted, and then flowed no more :
My horse upon the barrier of the bridge
Stumbled ; I started ; and was wide awake.
'Twas an unpleasant dream.

VAN RYK.

It was, my lord.

I wonder how I marked not that you slept.

ARTEVELDE.

I must be wakeful now. Who waits ? who's there ?

(To an ATTENDANT who enters.)

The man I sent to Ypres with a letter—
Has he returned ?

ATTENDANT.

But now, my lord, arrived ;

And with him Father John.

ARTEVELDE.

He come already !

With more alacrity he meets my wish
Than I deserve. Prithee, conduct him hither.

ATTENDANT.

He comes, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Then leave us—No, Van Ryk,
Not you ; or if you will, lie down within,
And rest you till I call.

VAN RYK.

My lord, I will.

[*Exeunt* VAN RYK and the ATTENDANT.]

Enter FATHER JOHN.

ARTEVELDE.

My honoured master, if a thousand welcomes
Could carry more than one, I'd say the word
More oft than you your Ave and your creed.
But welcome is enough.

FATHER JOHN.

God's love, my son,
Be with you alway. We have lately been
In outward act more strangers than we were,
But inwardly, I fain would hope, unaltered.

ARTEVELDE.

Unaltered, on my soul ! The storms of state

From time to time heave up some monstrous ridge,
Which each from other hides two friendly barks ;
Nought else divides us, and we steer, I trust,
One course, are guided by one stedfast star,
That so one anchorage we may reach at last.
The cares and mighty troubles of the times
Have kept me company, and shut yours out.

FATHER JOHN.

It is your place, my son ; private respects
Should be far from you—'tis no blame of yours.
But whence the present call ?

ARTEVELDE.

To that at once.

France is in arms ; the earl that was of Flanders
From Hedin went by Arras to Bapaume
On Wednesday se'nnight, if my scouts say true,
And there my lord of Burgundy he met,
And with him made a covenant ; from thence
They went to Senlis, where the young king lies,
And there the dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon
Had gathered from all parts a mighty force,
Some eighty or a hundred thousand men.
May that not startle me ?

FATHER JOHN.

'Tis a large levy.

But yet you muster more.

ARTEVELDE.

Of men at arms

Not half the tale ; and those for Senlis bound
Would double—so says fame—those now arrived.
It were a vain and profitless attempt
To disbelieve my danger, howsoe'er
I show a careless aspect to the crowd.
If Nicholas le Flamand call not back
The French king's force, as much I fear he will not,
There's one sufficiency of aid can reach
The measure of my need ; one and no more ;
And that is aid from England. This not sent,
Or else belated,—coming in the dusk
And sunset of my fortunes,—where am I ?

FATHER JOHN.

At England's council board in Edward's days
Sloth and delay had never seats ; no paper
Lay gathering dust and losing its fresh looks,
No business lodged : would that it were so now !
Yet surely if king Richard deem it meet

And useful to his realm to send you aid,
'Twill come with speed.

ARTEVELDE.

He knows not that despatch
Is now so all-important. Nor from those
I sent him, will he learn it. I myself
Thought not king Charles had crept so close upon me,
Else had I put your kindness then to proofs
Which I intend it now,—else had I asked
Your presence then in England.

FATHER JOHN.

Nay, my son,
Six have you sent already—on their way
Our humble hospitality they shared
At Ypres.

ARTEVELDE.

Then their quality you saw.
They were the best, methought, that I could spare
For foreign service, whilst thus pressed at home.
The first for state and dignity was named ;
He whom Pope Urbayne, after Ghent rebelled,
Appointed bishop to receive the dues
Which else had fallen to the see of Tournay,

Where Clement is acknowledged ; for this end
Was he a bishop made, and to say truth
He's equal to his function. Next in rank
Comes our sagacious friend, John Sercolacke ;
None better and none safer in affairs,
Were it but given to ponder and devise
Beforehand what at every need to say.
But should king Richard ask him on the sudden
What brought him there, confounded will he stand
Till livelier tongues from emptier heads have spoken ;
Then on the morrow to a tittle know
What should have been his answer.

FATHER JOHN.

Lois de Vaux

And master Blondel-Vatre have glib tongues.

ARTEVELDE.

Than Lois de Vaux there's no man sooner sees
Whatever at a glance is visible ;
What is not, he can never see at all.
Quick-witted is he, versatile, seizing points,
But never solving questions ; vain he is—
It is his pride to see things on all sides
Which best to do he sets them on their corners.

Present before him arguments by scores
Bearing diversely on the affair in hand,
He'll see them all successively distinctly,
Yet never two of them can see together,
Or gather, blend, and balance what he sees
To make up one account; a mind it is
Accessible to reason's subtlest rays,
And many enter there, but none converge;
It is an army with no general,
An arch without a key-stone.—Then the other
Good Martin Blondel-Vatre—he is rich
In nothing else but difficulties and doubts.
You shall be told the evil of your scheme,
But not the scheme that's better. He forgets
That policy, expecting not clear gain,
Deals ever in alternatives. He's wise
In negatives, is skilful at erasures,
Expert in stepping backwards, an adept
At auguring eclipses. But admit
His apprehensions and demand, what then?
And you shall find you've turned the blank leaf over.

FATHER JOHN.

Still three are left.

ARTEVELDE.

Three names, and nothing more.

To please the towns that gave them birth they're sent,
 Not for their merits. Verily, Father John,
 I should not willingly invade your leisure,
 Or mix you up with my precarious fortunes ;
 But I am as a debtor against whom
 The writs are out—I'm driven upon my friends ;
 Say, will you stead me ?

FATHER JOHN.

With my best of service,
 Such as it may be. To King Richard's court
 I will set forth to-morrow.

ARTEVELDE.

— Ever kind !

The faithfullest as the first of all my friends.
 Early to-morrow then we'll treat in full
 The matter of your mission. Now, good night.

FATHER JOHN.

Adieu till then, and peace be with your slumbers.

[*Exit.*

ARTEVELDE.

Their hour is yet to come What ho ! Van Ryk !

Enter Van Ryk.

You're sure, Van Ryk, it has not yet transpired
That I am in the camp ?

VAN RYK.

Certain, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Then come with me ; we'll cast a casual eye
On them that keep the watch ;—though sooth to say,
I wish my day's work over,—to forget
This restless world, and slumber like a babe ;
For I am very tired—yea, tired at heart.

VAN RYK.

Your spirits were wont to bear you up more freshly.
If I might speak, my lord, my humble mind,
You have not, since your honoured lady's death,
In such a sovereignty possessed yourself,
As you were wont to say that all men should.
Your thoughts have been more inwardly directed,
And led by fancies : should I be too bold
And let my duty lag behind my love,
To put you thus in mind, I crave your pardon.

ARTEVELDE.

That was a loss, Van Ryk ; that was a loss.

The love betwixt us was not as the flush
And momentary kindling in warm youth ;
But marriage and what term of time was given
Brought hourly increase to our common store.
Well—I am now the sport of circumstance,
Driven from my anchorage ;—yet deem not thou
That I my soul surrender to the past,
In chains and bondage ;—that it is not so,
Bear witness for me long and busy days,
Which jostling and importunate affairs
So push and elbow, they but seldom leave
Shy midnight uninvaded. No, Van Ryk ;
At eve returning wearied to my tent,
If sometimes I may seem to stray in thought,
Seeking what is not there, the mood is brief,
The operative function within call,
Nor know I that for any little hour
The weal of Flanders (if I may presume
To hook it on my hours) is yielded up
To idle thought, or vacant retrospect.
But now this body, exigent of rest,
Will needs put in a claim. One round we'll take,
And then to bed.

VAN RYK.

My lord, you must be tired.

I am too bold to trouble you so late
With my unprofitable talk.

ARTEVELDE.

Not so ;

Your talk is always welcome. There within
You'll find a wardrobe, with some varlets' cloaks
For use at need ; take one about yourself,
And meet me with another at the gate.

[*Exit* VAN RYK.

A serviceable, faithful, thoughtful friend,
Is old Van Ryk, and of a humble nature,
And yet with faculties and gifts of sense,
Which place him justly on no lowly level—
Why should I say a lowlier than my own,
Or otherwise than as an equal use him ?
That with familiarity respect
Doth slacken, is a word of common use.
I never found it so.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The interior of the State Pavilion. VAN ARTEVELDE seated at the head of his Council, with Attendants. The FRENCH HERALD and SIR FLEUREANT of HEURLEE. ARTEVELDE rises to receive the HERALD and reseats himself.

ARTEVELDE.

France, I perceive, Sir Herald, owns at length
The laws of polity and civil use,
A recognition which I hardly hoped ;
For when the messenger that late I sent
In amity, with friendly missives charged,
Was sent to prison, I deemed some barbarous tribe,
That knew no usages of Christian lands,
Had dispossessed you and usurped the realm.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord, you have your messenger again.

ARTEVELDE.

Aye sir, but not through courtesy I think,
Nor yet through love.

(*To the Herald.*)

Sir, you have leave to speak.

HERALD.

My lord, I humbly thank you. I entreat
That in my speech should aught offend your ears,
You from the utterer will remove the fault.
My office I obey and not my will,
Nor is a word that I'm to speak mine own.

ARTEVELDE.

Sir, nothing you can say shall be so gross,
Offensive, or unmannerly conceived,
As that it shall not credibly appear
To come from them that sent you ; speak, then, freely.

HERALD.

Philip of Artevelde, sole son of Jacques,
Maltster and brewer in the town of Ghent,
The realm of France this unto thee delivers :
That forasmuch as thou, a liegeman born
To the Earl of Flanders, hast rebelled against him,
And with thy manifold treasons and contempts

Of duty and allegiance, hast drawn in
By twenties and by forties his good towns
To rise in fury and forget themselves,—
Thus saith the puissant and mighty lord,
The earl's affectionate kinsman, Charles of France :
Thou from before this town of Oudenarde
With all thy host shalt vanish like a mist ;
Thou shalt surrender to their rightful lord
The towns of Ghent, and Ypres, Cassel, Bruges,
Of Thorout, Rousselart, Damme, Sluys, and Bergues,
Of Harlebecque, Poperinguen, Dendermonde,
Alost and Grammont ; and with them all towns
Of lesser name, all castles and strong houses,
Shalt thou deliver up before the Feast
Of Corpus Christi coming, which undone
He the said puissant king, Sir Charles of France,
With all attendance of his chivalry,
Will raise his banner and his kingdom's force,
And scattering that vile people which thou lead'st,
Will hang thee on a tree and nail thy head
Over the gates of Ghent, the mother of ill
That spawned thee ;—and for these and sundry more
Just reasons and sufficient, thou art warned
To make thy peace betimes, and so God keep thee !

ARTEVELDE.

Sir Herald, thou hast well discharged thyself
Of an ill function. Take these links of gold
And with the company of words I give thee
Back to the braggart king from whom thou cam'st.
First, of my father :—had he lived to know
His glories, deeds, and dignities postponed
To names of barons, earls, and counts (that here
Are to men's ears importunately common
As chimes to dwellers in the market-place)
He with a silent and a bitter mirth
Had listened to the boast: may he his son
Pardon for in comparison setting forth
With his the name of this disconsolate earl.
How stand they in the title-deeds of fame !
What hold and heritage in distant times
Doth each enjoy—what posthumous possession ?
The dusty chronicler with painful search,
Long fingering forgotten scrolls, indites
That Louis Mâle was sometime Earl of Flanders,
That Louis Mâle his sometime earldom lost,
Through wrongs by him committed, that he lived
An outcast long in dole not undeserved,

And died dependent : there the history ends,
And who of them that hear it wastes a thought
On the unfriended fate of Louis Mâle ?
But turn the page and look we for the tale
Of Artevelde's renown. What man was this ?
He humbly born, he highly gifted rose
By steps of various enterprise, by skill,
By native vigour to wide sway, and took
What his vain rival having could not keep.
His glory shall not cease, though cloth of gold
Wrap him no more, for not of golden cloth,
Nor fur, nor miniver, his greatness came,
Whose fortunes were inborn : strip me the two,
This were the humblest, that the noblest, beggar
That ever braved a storm !

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord, your pardon ;

Nothing was uttered in disparagement
Of your famed father, though a longer life
And better would he assuredly have lived,
Had it seemed good to him to follow forth
His former craft, nor turn aside to brew
These frothy insurrections.

ARTEVELDE.

Sir, your back
Shows me no tabard, nor a sign beside,
Denoting what your office is that asks
A hearing in this presence ; nor know I yet
By what so friendly fortune I am graced
With your good company and gentle speech.
But we are here no niggards of respect
To merit's unauthenticated forms,
And therefore do I answer you, and thus :
You speak of insurrections : bear in mind
Against what rule my father and myself
Have been insurgent ; whom did we supplant ?—
There was a time, so ancient records tell,
There were communities, scarce known by name
In these degenerate days, but once far-famed,
Where liberty and justice, hand in hand,
Ordered the common weal ; where great men grew
Up to their natural eminence, and none,
Saving the wise, just, eloquent, were great ;
Where power was of God's gift, to whom he gave
Supremacy of merit, the sole means
And broad highway to power, that ever then

Was meritiously administered,
Whilst all its instruments from first to last,
The tools of state for service high or low,
Were chosen for their aptness to those ends
Which virtue meditates. To shake the ground
Deep-founded whereupon this structure stood,
Was verily a crime ; a treason it was,
Conspiracies to hatch against this state
And its free innocence. But now, I ask,
Where is there on God's earth that polity
Which it is not, by consequence converse,
A treason against nature to uphold ?
Whom may we now call free ? whom great ? whom
wise ?
Whom innocent ?—the free are only they
Whom power makes free to execute all ills
Their hearts imagine ; they are only great
Whose passions nurse them from their cradles up
In luxury and lewdness,—whom to see
Is to despise, whose aspects put to scorn
Their station's eminence ; the wise, they only
Who wait obscurely till the bolts of heaven
Shall break upon the land, and give them light

Whereby to walk ; the innocent, alas !
Poor innocence lies where four roads meet,
A stone upon her head, a stake driven through her,
For who is innocent that cares to live ?
The hand of power doth press the very life
Of innocence out ! What then remains
But in the cause of nature to stand forth,
And turn this frame of things the right side up ?
For this the hour is come, the sword is drawn,
And tell your masters vainly they resist.
Nature, that slept beneath their poisonous drugs,
Is up and stirring, and from north and south,
From east and west, from England and from France,
From Germany, and Flanders, and Navarre,
Shall stand against them like a beast at bay.
The blood that they have shed will hide no longer
In the blood-sloken soil, but cries to heaven.
Their cruelties and wrongs against the poor
Shall quicken into swarms of venomous snakes,
And hiss through all the earth, till o'er the earth,
That ceases then from hissings and from groans,
Rises the song—How are the mighty fallen !
And by the peasant's hand ! Low lie the proud !

And smitten with the weapons of the poor—
The blacksmith's hammer and the woodsman's axe.
Their tale is told ; and for that they were rich,
And robbed the poor ; and for that they were strong,
And scourged the weak ; and for that they made laws
Which turned the sweat of labour's brow to blood,—
For these their sins the nations cast them out,
The dunghills are their death-beds, and the stench
From their uncover'd carrion steaming wide,
Turns in the nostrils of enfranchised man
To a sweet savour. These things come to pass
From small beginnings, because God is just.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Sir, you are bold in prophecy, but words
Will not demolish kingdoms. This alone
Is clear, that we are charged to carry back
A warlike answer.

ARTEVELDE.

You have caught my sense.

Let no more words be wasted. What I said
Shall be engrossed, and rendered to your hands
To spare your memories ; and so farewell
Unto your functions. For yourselves, I pray you

To grace our table with your company
At dinner time, and taste of what we have.
Meantime farewell. And you, my honoured friends
And councillors, I bid you to the board.
Adieu till then. Good father, by your leave
I will detain you.

(*The council breaks up. The HERALD and SIR FLEURE-ANT are conducted out, and only VAN ARTEVELDE and FATHER JOHN remain. After a pause ARTEVELDE proceeds.*)

Did I say too much ?
What think you ? was I rash ?

FATHER JOHN.

My son, my son !
You've spoken some irrevocable words,
And more, in my weak judgment, than were wise.
Till now might accident have opened out
A way to concord. Casualties or care
Might yet have counselled peace, and was it well
To send this challenge ?

ARTEVELDE.

Judge me not unheard.
We have been too successful to be safe

In standing still. Things are too far afoot.
Being so high as this, to be no higher
Were presently to fall. France will not brook
To see me as I am, though I should bear
My honours ne'er so meekly. With bold words
I magnify my strength.—Perhaps may dim
Their fire-new courage, their advance delay,
And raise the spirits of my friends.

FATHER JOHN.

My son,

These are the after-thoughts that reason coins
To justify excess, and pay the debts
Of passion's prodigality.

ARTEVELDE.

Nay, nay!

Something of passion may have mixed with this,
Good Father, but I lost not from my thoughts
The policy I speak of.

FATHER JOHN.

Might I use
The liberty of former days to one
That's since so much exalted, I would tell
How it is said abroad that Artevelde

Is not unaltered since he rose to power;
Is not unvisited of worldly pride
And its attendant passions.

ARTEVELDE.

Say they so ?

Well, if it be so it is late to mend ;
For self-amendment is a work of time,
And business will not wait. Such as I am,
For better or for worse the world must take me,
For I must hasten on. Perhaps the state
And royal splendour I affect, is deemed
A proof of pride,—yet they that these contemn
Know little of the springs that move mankind.
'Tis but a juvenile philosophy
That casts such things aside,
Which, be they in themselves vile or precious,
Are means to govern. Or I'm deemed morose,
Severe, impatient of what hinders me ?
Yet think what manner of men are these I rule ;
What patience might have made of them, reflect.
If I be stern or fierce, 'tis from strong need
And strange provocatives. If (which I own not)
I have drunk deeper of ambition's cup,

Be it remembered that the cup of love
Was wrested from my hand. Enough of this.
Ambition has its uses in the scheme
Of Providence, whose instrument I am
To work some changes in the world or die.
This hasty coming of the French disturbs me,
And I could wish you gone.

FATHER JOHN.

My horses wait
And I am ready. I will bear in mind
With the best memory that my years permit,
Your charges ; and if nothing more remains,
God's blessing on your enterprise and you !
I go my way.

ARTEVELDE.

So long as lies the Lis
Between our hosts, I have the less to fear.
Say to King Richard I shall strive to keep
The passes of the Lis, and if his aid
Find them unforced, his way to France is straight
As that to Windsor. I shall guard the Lis
With watch as circumspect as seamen keep
When in the night the leeward breakers flash.

But if he linger and the Lis be forced,
Tell him our days are numbered, and that three
Shall close this contest. I am harping still
On the same string ; but you, my friend revered,
Will kindly pardon my solicitudes.
I keep you now no longer ; fare you well ;
And may we meet again and meet in joy !
God grant it ! fare you well.

FATHER JOHN.

My horses, ho !

ARTEVELDE.

Let me attend you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A PLATFORM NEAR ARTEVELDE'S PAVILION.

VAN MUCK is seated at some distance in the background. Enter SIR FLEUREANT and the HERALD.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Then be it as I said : the sun shall set
'Twixt seven and eight ; ere then I'll know my course ;
And if the Regent lend a willing ear

To the Duke's message, and this lady send
Upon his summons, merrily we go
Together, and who meets us on the road
Shall say, a goodly company, God bless them !
A man, a woman, and a pursuivant.
But 'twill not be so.

HERALD.

Let us hope it may.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Assure yourself 'twill otherwise befall.
He will retain her, or herself hold back.
Then shall it be your prudence to depart
With your best speed, whilst I invent a cause
For lingering. I will not take my answer,
But spin the matter of my mission out.
Into such length as with that web to hide
My underworkings. Be you gone from Flanders
Fast as you may and far, when this falls out,
And you shall tell the duke with what good will
I hazard in his service loss of all
I have to lose,—my life.

HERALD.

Loth should I be

To leave you so, but it were vain for me
To share your risk, who cannot aid your end.

SIR FLEUREANT (*discovering VAN MUCK*).

Whom have we here? a listener? God forbid!
And yet he seems attentive, and his ears
Are easy of approach, the covered way,
Scarp, counterscarp, and parapet, is rased.
Holloa, sir, are you there! Give you good-day!
What think you we were saying?

VAN MUCK.

I'm hard of hearing, sir, I ask your pardon.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Oh! we can pardon that; what, deaf—stone-deaf?

VAN MUCK.

No, sir, thank God! no deafer than yourself,
But slowish, sir, of hearing.

SIR FLEUREANT.

What, snail-slow?

VAN MUCK.

No, sir, no slower than another man,
But not so quick of hearing, sir, as some,
Being a little deaf.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Content thee, friend ;
Thine ears are sharper than thine apprehension.
But wherefore want they flaps ? who docked them
thus ?

VAN MUCK.

It is no trouble nor no loss to you,
Whoever did it.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Pardon me, my friend,
It troubles me, and doth offend mine eyes,
To see thee lack those handles to thy head.
Tell me who snipped them ?

VAN MUCK.

'Twas my lord, the regent.

SIR FLEUREANT.

The regent ? (*To the Herald.*) Upon this I go to
work.

The regent ? and you wait upon him here ?

VAN MUCK.

I wait to ask him for my company :
I was the captain of a company.

HERALD.

What, took he thy command away besides ?

VAN MUCK.

Yea, sir.

HERALD.

And wherefore ? what was thy offence ?

VAN MUCK.

I was a little mastered, sir, with drink,
The night we carried Yerken, and a maid
That ran upon me, sir, I know not how,
Forswore herself, and said I forced her will.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Well.

VAN MUCK.

And 'twas this that lost me my command.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Impossible ! I've done as much myself
A thousand times.

VAN MUCK.

'Twas nothing, sir, but this.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Oh, monstrous ! and you ask him to replace you ?

VAN MUCK.

Yea, sir, to give me my command again.

SIR FLEUREANT.

And wilt thou ask him to replace thine ears ?

VAN MUCK.

No, sir.

SIR FLEUREANT.

You'd best ; for you'll succeed as soon.

I've heard that never did he change his mind
But once, since he was regent ; once he did ;
'Twas when he kindly pardoned Peter Shultz.
He changed his mind and hung him.

VAN MUCK.

By our lady !

I would not ask him if I knew for certain
He would deny me.

SIR FLEUREANT.

What, deny thee ? hang thee.
Take service with another lord—leave him ;
Thou hast been foully dealt with. Never hope
To conquer pride with humbleness, but turn
To them that will be proud to use thee well.
I'll show thee many such, and to begin,
Here is myself. What lack'st thou ? Money ? See—
I am provided : hold me forth thy hand ;

The regent left thee hands; was that his skill ?
The injury that disables is more wise
Than that which stings—a hand he left to take—
And here's to fill it—and a hand to strike—
Look not amazed, I ask thee not to lift it ;
I ask thee but to carry me a letter
As far as Bruges.

VAN MUCK.

Sir, I'll be bound to do it.

SIR FLEUREANT.

And are there many men besides thyself
That have lost rank and service in the camp ?

VAN MUCK.

It was but yesterday two constables
Had their discharge.

SIR FLEUREANT.

And why were *they* dismissed ?

VAN MUCK.

'Twas by the regent's order ; 'twas, he said.
Because they made more riots in the camp
Than they prevented.

SIR FLEUREANT.

He is hard to please.

What are they called?

VAN MUCK.

Jan Bulsen and Carl Kortz.

(*Trumpets are heard at a little distance.*)

HERALD.

Hark to the regent's trumpets.

VAN MUCK.

He has finished

His daily rounds, and will be here anon.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Name me a place of meeting.

VAN MUCK.

The west dyke,

Behind the sutler Merlick's tent.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Do thou

And Kortz, and Bulsen, at the hour of nine,
Be there to take my orders. Get thee gone,
And be not seen till then. Go this way out,
That so the regent meet thee not.

[*Exit VAN MUCK.*

That seed

Is sown, but whether I shall reap the fruits,

Is yet in Artevelde's arbitrement.

Let him comply, and those three hens shall meet
To hatch an addle egg.

HERALD.

'Tis more than time
That I were fairly on the road to France.
You're pushing on apace.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Our thrift lies there.
Spare time, spend gold, and so you win the day !

*'For strongest castle, tower, and town,
The golden bullet beateth down!'*

(*Trumpets again.*)

Enter VAN ARTEVELDE.

ARTEVELDE.

You are equipped, I see, for taking horse ;
I pray you have Sir Charles of France informed
It was your diligence with such speed dismissed you,
And not my lack of hospitality.

HERALD.

My lord, we surely shall report in France
That we were well and bounteously entreated.

Thankfully now, my lord, I take my leave ;
 Sir Fleureant follows, and ere night will reach
 The hostel where we rest.

[*Exit Herald.*

ARTEVELDE.

You are not, I will hope, so much in haste ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord, I tarry but an hour behind,
 And not for idleness. My lord, I'm charged
 With a strange mission, as to you 'twill seem,
 But of great moment, from his grace of Bourbon.

ARTEVELDE.

Sir, I attend ; his grace has all my ears.
 What would he ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

He has voices more than ten
 In the king's council ; and as they may speak
 Touching this war, 'twill likely be resolved.
 Now he is not implacably, as some,
 Envenomed, and if justice were but done him
 He might be pacified, and turn the course
 Of these precipitate counsels.

ARTEVELDE.

By mine honour,

If there be justice I can render him,
He should receive it from my ready hands,
Although his voice in council were as small
As a dog-whistle. What may be his grief?

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord, he sent you letters that pourtrayed
His grief in all its blackness. To be short,
He wants his paramour ; the damsel fair
Whom you surprised, sojourning at the court
Of Louis Mâle, the day that Bruges was taken.

ARTEVELDE.

Sir, he's thrice welcome to his paramour ;
I never have withheld her.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Then to me,
A servant of the prince, 'tis his desire
She be consigned, to take her to the palace
At Senlis.

ARTEVELDE.

To the hands of whom she will
I yield the lady, to go where she will,
Were it to the palace of the prince of darkness.
But at the lady's bidding it must be,
Not at the prince's.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Do I learn from this
The lady is reluctant ?

ARTEVELDE.

By no means.

The dangers of the journey have deterred her
From taking my safe-conduct heretofore,
When, at the instance of the Duke of Bourbon,
I offered it ; but, having come thus far
Toward the frontier, she may travel hence
In your protection safely.

SIR FLEUREANT.

May I learn
Her pleasure from herself ?

ARTEVELDE.

I'll name your wish
To see her, and she doubtless will comply.
Attendance here !

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Inform the foreign lady,
That with her leave, at her convenient leisure,
I will entreat admittance for some words
Of brief discourse.

[*Exit ATTENDANT.*]

We'll walk towards her tent,
If that's your pleasure.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Still at your command.

[*Ereunt.*

SCENE III.

A PAVILION RICHLY HUNG AND FURNISHED.

ELENA and her attendant CECILE.

ELENA.

Art thou not weary of the camp, Cecile ?

CECILE.

Oh no, my lady, it is always stirring ;
There is good sport upon the market-days,
And women are much made of.

ELENA.

Well, I am.

Or rather I am weary of myself,
And carry dulness with me as the wind
Carries the cloud, and wheresoe'er I go,
An atmosphere of darkness and of storm
Girdles me round. I wish that I were dead.

CECILE.

For shame, my lady ! you that are so young
And beautiful, with all the world before you :
It is a sin to be so discontent.

ELENA.

Give me my lute, and I will answer that.

(*She sings.*)

Down lay in a nook my lady's brach,
And said my feet are sore,
I cannot follow with the pack
A hunting of the boar.

And though the horn sounds never so clear
With the hounds in loud uproar,
Yet I must stop and lie down here,
Because my feet are sore.

The huntsman when he heard the same,
What answer did he give ?
The dog that's lame is much to blame,
He is not fit to live.

Lo ! some one comes.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT.

The regent, madam, would attend your leisure

For some few moments' private conversation,
If it might please you to admit him.

ELENA.

Surely ;

Acquaint him that I wait upon his pleasure.

[*Exit Attendant.*

What can he want ! he never asked before
To speak with me in private. It is strange ;
But it will end in nothing. Go, Cecile.

Stop ; I've forgotten if my hair was dressed
This morning ; put it right. Look, here he comes ;
But there's one with him—said he not alone
He wished to see me ? I will go within
And thou canst say that I expect him there.

[*Exit.*

Enter VAN ARTEVELDE and SIR FLEUREANT.

CECILE (*addressing the former*).

My lady waits your pleasure, sir, within.

(VAN ARTEVELDE passes into the inner apartment.)
Your servant, sir ; would you too see my mistress ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

If it so please your master.

CECILE.

Who's my master ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

I cry you mercy, is it not the regent ?

CECILE.

The regent is no master, sir, of mine.

SIR FLEUREANT.

No ?

CECILE.

By no means.

SIR FLEUREANT.

But he is often here ?

CECILE.

No oftener than it pleases him to come

And her to see him.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Which is twice a-day.

CECILE.

Who told you that ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

A cupid that brake loose

From the close service he was sent upon,

Which was to watch their meetings.

CECILE.

Said he so ?

The runaway ! he told you such a lie !

SIR FLEUREANT.

Nay, but he had it from yourself.

CECILE.

My God !

He told you such another !

SIR FLEUREANT.

And the truth ?

CECILE.

The well is not so deep but you may see it.

The regent sometimes at the close of day
Has fits of lowness, and is wearied much
With galloping so long from post to post,
And this and that and t'other—then my lady
Is skilled in minstrelsy, and hath a voice
That whoso hears feels for the while no touch
Of pain or weariness or troubled thoughts,
But following in the train of melody
To that seductive sequence of sweet sounds
Tunes his attentive mind.

SIR FLEUREANT.

She sings him songs.

CECILE.

'Tis nothing less than so.

SIR FLEUREANT.

The livelong night?

CECILE.

An hour or two, no more.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Which being past—

CECILE.

Which being past, he wishes her good rest

And so departs.

SIR FLEUREANT.

And all the while he's there

Are you there too?

CECILE.

Never an instant gone.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Will you swear that?

CECILE.

Assuredly I will.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Or any thing beside.

CECILE.

I crave your pardon;

I would not swear that you had learnt good manners ;
That you'd been whipped as often as need was
In breeding of you up, I would not swear ;
I would not swear that what you wanted then
Has not been since made good ; I would not swear—

SIR FLEUREANT.

Quarter, quarter !—truce to your would not swearing !
Here is the regent.

Enter ARTEVELDE with ELENA.

ARTEVELDE.

Sir Fleureant, I have pled in your behalf
And gained you audience ; for the rest, your trust
Is in your eloquence.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Alas ! my lord,
In nothing better ? I had placed my trust
Not in the eloquence of rugged man,
But woman's fair fidelity.

ELENA.

Sir knight,
I will not task your tongue for eloquence,
Though it be ne'er so ready.

ARTEVELDE.

I am here

But an intruder. I will say no more,
Save that the lady's choice, be what it may,
Commands my utmost means and best good-will.

[*Exit.*]

ELENA.

Stay, stay, Cecile ; you will attend me here.
You come, sir, from my lord the Duke of Bourbon ;
And why you come I partly can collect
From what the regent spake. The duke's desire
Is that I join him presently in France.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Such is his—what ?—his madness had I called it
Before I saw you,—but I call it now
Only his bitter fate, that nothing gay
In palaces or courts can win him off
From thoughts of you, that nothing high or great
In policy or war has power to move him,
Nothing which fame awaits, ambition woos,
Whilst you are absent entertains his mind.

ELENA.

I'm sorry if my absence vex the duke,
Sorry if it offend him.

SIR FLEUREANT.

'Tis a grief
More cutting as anticipated less ;
For though the tie had not the church's sanction,
He had not deemed it therefore less secure.
Such faith was his in what he thought was faith
In her he loved, that all the world's traditions
Of woman's hollow words and treacherous wiles
Could not dissuade him from his fast belief.
Moreover he has proffered deeds of gift
As ample as the dowry of a duchess,
Would you but meet his wishes and return
But for a day, and should you find thenceforth
Just cause of discontent, with this rich freight
Might you depart as freely as before.

ELENA.

The duke has been most liberal of his offers,
And I have said I'm sorry to fall out
With what his grace desires—that is not all—
His grace has been as liberal of reproaches ;
But what, then, is his grief ? Alas ! alas !
The world's traditions may be true that speak
Of woman's infidelities and wiles,

But truer far that scripture is which saith
‘Put not your trust in princes.’

SIR FLEUREANT.

This is strange !
And would amaze him much. In what, I pray,
Has he deceived you ?

ELENA.

Men, sir, think it little ;
'Tis less than little in a prince's judgment ;
In woman's estimation it is much.

SIR FLEUREANT.

I would entreat you to explain it farther.

ELENA.

So I design : thus tell the duke from me :
I could have loved him once—not with the heat
Of that affection which himself conceived—
(For this poor heart had prodigally spent
Its fund of youthful passion ere we met)—
But with a reasonably warm regard.
This could I have bestowed for many a year,
And did bestow at first, and all went well.
But soon the venomous world wherein we lived
Assailed the prince with jocular remark

And question keen, importing that his soul
Was yoked in soft subjection to a woman ;
And were she of good life and conversation,
Insidious slanderers said, 'twere not so strange,
But he is vanquished by his paramour !

So the word went, and as it reached his ear
From time to time repeated, he grew cold,
Captious, suspicious, full of slights and cavils,
Asserting his supremacy in words
Of needless contradiction. This I bore
Though not by such sad change unalienate ;
But presently there came to me reports,
Authentic though malignant, of loose gibes
Let fall among his retinue, whereby
His grace, to keep his wit in good repute
For shrewdness, and to boast his liberty,
Had shamefully belied his own belief—
For firm belief he had—that I was chaste.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Oh mischief ! you gave credence to such tales !

ELENA.

This which I speak of, carry to the duke ;
'Tis therefore I relate it—he well knows

If it be true or false. Say further this :
Finding his grace thus pitiable weak,
Alternate slave of vanity and love,
I from that moment in my heart resolved
To break the link that bound us : to this end
I parted from his company at Bruges,
And by the same abiding, I have made
This free deliverance of my mind to you.
Which task fulfilled, (I'm sorry from my soul,
If it offend,) I wish you, sir, farewell.

[*Exit, CECILE following.*

SIR FLEUREANT.

'Tis a magnanimous harlot ! By my faith
Of all the queans that on my humble head
Have poured the vials of their wrath and scorn,
This is the prettiest, and I think, the proudest.
If one might bolt the bran from her discourse
I should take leave to guess her firm resolve
Was not fast clenched till Artevelde took Bruges.
Whichever way it be, my path is plain
Though slippery, and forth I go upon it.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

NIGHT.—A DINGLE IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CAMP, BEHIND A SUTLER'S TENT.

VAN KORTZ, *to whom enter VAN MUCK.*

VAN KORTZ.

Who's there—Van Muck? holloa you, boy! what speed?

VAN MUCK.

Hush, hush! speak low; is no one here but you?

VAN KORTZ.

No jolly soul beside.

VAN MUCK.

Has the watch past?

VAN KORTZ.

By my permission, yes. I drew a shaft
Chock to the steel, and from behind this tree
Aimed it at Serjeant Laubscher's black old heart,

In quittance of an ancient debt I owe him ;
But pooh ! I let him pass.

VAN MUCK.

Why, were you mad ?
It would have baulked our meeting.

VAN KORTZ.

What care I ?

VAN MUCK.

It is a matter of five hundred merks
White money down.

VAN KORTZ.

Aye, let me see it down,
And I'll believe you.

VAN MUCK.

He will soon be here,
And then you'll—here he is—no, 'tis but Bulsen.

Enter BULSEN.

BULSEN.

Well, is all right ? 'tis close upon the hour.

VAN KORTZ.

Nothing is stirring ; stand from out the trees

That he may see us, lest he miss the spot.
Art certain that he'll bring the money here ?

VAN MUCK.

I saw it in his hands ; doubtless he'll bring it.

VAN KORTZ.

Why, hark ye then—what need to go to Ghent,
Or Bruges, or Ypres, to get gold that's here ?

VAN MUCK.

He gives it us for taking letters hence,
To Ghent, and Bruges, and Ypres.

VAN KORTZ.

Hold thy peace,

Thou nick-ear'd lubber ; what have we to do
With whys and wherefores ? Here he brings the gold,
And hence he takes it not, if we be men.
What say ye ?

BULSEN.

Cut his throat !

VAN MUCK.

How now ! how now !

I would not for the world.

VAN KORTZ.

Pluck up thy heart ;

Hast courage but for half a sin ? As good
To eat the devil as the broth he's boiled in.

VAN MUCK.

For mercy's sake do nothing to molest him !
Twas I that brought him here, and God he knows
I did not go about to take his life.

VAN KORTZ.

Why, go thy way then ; two like me and Bulsen
Are men enough.

BULSEN.

Enough to win the booty,
And by that token, friend, enough to share it.

VAN KORTZ.

Go to the devil with thy dolorous cheer ;
There is no manhood in thee. Get thee gone,
Or I shall try six inches of my knife
On thine own inmeats first.

BULSEN.

Thou'dst best be gone ;
Thou art but in the way.

VAN KORTZ.

Go, pudding-heart !
Take thy huge offal and white liver hence,

Or in a twinkling of this true-blue steel
I shall be butching thee from nape to rump.

BULSEN.

Go thou thy ways, and thank thy prosperous stars
Thou art let live.

VAN MUCK.

I am rewarded bravely
For bringing this about ; but ye shall see
If it be better for you.

BULSEN.

Hold, come back—

What, fast and loose—is that your game ?—soho !
I see him coming.

SIR FLEUREANT (*without*).

Soft ! was that the tent
He spoke of ? surely then—or—nay, I know not—
Where am I going ?

VAN KORTZ.

Come along, sir, come—
Where art thou going ?—I will tell thee where,—
Going to grass, Sir Fleureant of Heurlée,
With thy teeth upward. May that serve thy turn ?
Holloa, then, come along !

BULSEN.

Beware, beware.

Thou art the noisiest of all the cut-throats ;
Will nothing stop thy tongue ? This way, sir, here.

Enter SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE.

VAN MUCK (*passing between SIR FLEUREANT and the others*).

Your sword, Sir Fleureant ! stand upon your guard ;
We are not safe—there oft are men about
At such dark hours as this, that might surprise us—
Look to your guard—but we shall be a match
For more than one such.

BULSEN.

Never fear, Van Muck ;
If any such should break upon our meeting
We'd parley with them first, and see what good
Might come of fighting or of speaking fair.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Where is the danger ? you are dreaming, friends !
Let me explain the matter I've in hand.

VAN KORTZ.

Come, come, Sir Hurly-Burly ! where's your metal ?

Write us the matter down in white and yellow.
No danger ! but I say there shall be danger—
Out with this money—what if the regent knew—
Are men like us to be entrapped and sold,
And see no money down, Sir Hurly-Burly ?
You are a knight, and we are vile crossbow-men,
But steel is steel, and flesh is still but flesh,
So let us see your chinkers.

SIR FLEUREANT (*to Van Muck*).

Sure he's drunk !

Why brought you me a drunken knave like this ?

VAN MUCK.

He is not drunk, sir, better that he were !
If they are for foul play, so am not I,
Nor did I mean it.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Aye, is that their game ?

Sirs, ye mistook our honest friend, Van Muck ;
I could not in hard money bring you here
More than a moiety of the sums you'll earn
By carrying of my letters ; it is thus :
So much I'll pay you now, and as much more
You will receive in France from Hetz St. Croix,

King Charles's master of accompt. The king
Gave orders for the payments.

BULSEN.

It is well;
We will convey your letters, sir, with speed.

VAN KORTZ.

We'll trust to meet you afterward at court
To see us justly paid.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Enquire for me
When you arrive at Senlis or at Lisle,
Or wheresoe'er the court may then abide.
Here are the letters and the skins of gold
I give with each. The word is now 'Despatch !'
Speak not, nor eat nor drink with friend or foe,
But each man take his wallet on his back,
And steal away. No lack of Frenchmen's friends
You'll find at Bruges or Ypres, and these letters
Will bring you to their knowledge; and at Ghent
Though France may find less favour with the many,
Still there are some that will befriend you. Hence!
What noise is that ?

VAN MUCK.

It is the second watch.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Away then ;—fare you well.

[*Exeunt VAN MUCK, KORTZ, and BULSEN.*

Now if one miscreant of the three play false
This head is worth the value of a potsherd.
Speed is my best safe-conduct, then, to France.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

THE PAVILION, AS IN SCENE III. OF ACT II.

ARTEVELDE and ELENA. CECILE attending in the
back ground.

ELENA.

On your way hither, then, you passed through Ghent,
The city which you saved. How sweet a pleasure,
Revisiting a place which owes to you
All that it hath of glory or of ease !

ARTEVELDE.

Verily yes, it should have overjoyed me.
How diverse, how contrarious is man !
I know not wherefore, but I scarce was pleased
To see that town, now wallowing in wealth,

Which last I saw, and saw with hearty courage,
Pinched like a beggar wintering at death's door.
Now, both the mart was full, and church ; road, bridge,
River, and street, were populous and busy,
And money bags were tossed from hand to hand
Of men more thriftless than a miser's heir.
I liked it not ; my task, it seemed, was done ;
The arrow sped, the bow unbent, the cord
Soundless and slack. I came away ill pleased.

ELENA.

Perhaps you suffered losses in the siege ?

ARTEVELDE.

Not in the siege ; but I have suffered something.
There is a gate in Ghent—I passed beside it—
A threshold there, worn of my frequent feet,
Which I shall cross no more. But wherefore thus
Divert me from the topics I pursue ?
Think once again upon the proffered choice
Of French protection. Though my army wear
This hour an aspect of security,
A battle must be fought ere many days.

ELENA.

You have been very kind to me, my lord,

And in the bounty of your noble nature,
Despite those ineradicable stains
That streak my life, have used me with respect.
I will not quit your camp,—unless you wish it.

ARTEVELDE.

Am I in life's embellishments so rich,
In pleasures so redundant, as to wish
The chiefest one away? No, fairest friend;
Mine eyes have travelled this horizon round,
Ending where they began; and they have roved
The boundless empyrean up and down,
And 'mid the undistinguished tumbling host
Of the black clouds, have lighted on a soft
And solitary spot of azure sky,
Whereon they love to dwell. The clouds close in,
And soon may shut it from my searching sight;
But let me still behold it whilst I may.

ELENA.

You are so busy all day long, I feared
A woman's company and trifling talk
Would only importune you.

ARTEVELDE.

Think not so.

The sweets of converse and society
Are sweetest when they're snatched ; the often-comer,
The boon companion of a thousand feasts,
Whose eye has grown familiar with the fair,
Whose tutored tongue, by practice perfect made,
Is tamely talkative,—he never knows
That truest, rarest light of social joy,
Which gleams upon the man of many cares.

ELENA.

It is not every one could push aside
A country's weight so lightly.

ARTEVELDE.

By your leave,
There are but few that on so grave a theme
Continuously could ponder unrelieved.
The heart of man, walk it which way it will,
Sequestered or frequented, smooth or rough,
Down the deep valley amongst tinkling flocks,
Or 'mid the clang of trumpets and the march
Of clattering ordnance, still must have its halt,
Its hour of truce, its instant of repose,
Its inn of rest ; and craving still must seek
The food of its affections—still must slake

Its constant thirst of what is fresh and pure,
And pleasant to behold.

ELENA.

To you that thirst,
Despite inebriating draughts of glory,
Despite ambition, power, and strife, remains ;
But great men mostly lose the taste of joy,
Save from such things as make their greatness greater,
Which, growing still, o'ershadows more and more
Of less enjoyments, until all are sunk
In business of the state.

ARTEVELDE.

'Tis otherwise,
And ever was with me. It was not meant
By him who on the back the burthen bound,
That cares, though public, critical, and grave,
Should so encase us and encrust, as shuts
The gate on what is beautiful below,
And clogs those entries of the soul of man
Which lead the way to what he hath of heaven :
This was not meant, and me may not befall
Whilst thou remind'st me of those heavenly joys
I once possessed in peace. Life—life, my friend,

May hold a not unornamented course
Wherever it shall flow ; be the bed rocky,
Yet are there flowers, and none of brighter hue,
That to the rock are native. War itself
Deals in adornments, and the blade it wields
Is curiously carved and gaily gilt.
For me, let what is left of life, if brief,
Be bright, and let me kindle all its fires ;
For I am as a rocket hurled on high
But a few moments to be visible,
Which ended, all is dark.

Enter CECILE.

CECILE.

Gracious, my lady !

My lord, my humble duty to your highness.
If I might speak—

ARTEVELDE.

What hinders you, Cecile ?

ELENA.

Nought ever did, my lord, nor ever will ;
When she has breath you'll hear her.

CECILE.

Oh, my lady !

That frightful man I've told you of so oft
That comes for ever with his vows of love
And will not be denied,—I always said
Begone! How dare you! Get you gone forsooth!
To bring such tales to me! But still he came
And now to-night—

ARTEVELDE.

Who is it that she speaks of?

ELENA.

His name is—nay, God help my memory!
What is his name, Cecile?

CECILE.

Van Kortz, my lady.

ARTEVELDE.

Not he that once was marshalsman?

CECILE.

The same.

ARTEVELDE.

I know him well—his quality at least,
And his career I know. Right, right, Cecile;
Deny him stoutly, for he means no good.

CECILE.

I did, my lord,—I heartily denied him;

I said I never would so much as touch him.
I told him if he'd hang himself for love,
I'd love the rope that hanged him,—nothing else.

ARTEVELDE.

And yet he comes again ?

CECILE.

Even now, my lord,
He came as though it were to wreak his spite,
And showed me bags of gold, and said that now
He was so rich that he could wed a countess,
Let pass a waiting wench, and from this time
He ne'er would look so low, but mend his fortune.
I told him he might seek his fortune far,
Ere he should find his match for pride and greed ;
So with that word he set his spleen abroach,
And cursing all the camp, and most your highness,
Swore he could buy and sell the best amongst you.

ARTEVELDE.

What, said he so ? and showed you bags of gold ?
He has been selling something. Ho, Van Ryk !
Van Ryk is waiting, no ?

CECILE.

He is, my lord.

Enter VAN RYK.

ARTEVELDE.

Van Ryk, a word ;

Thou know'st Van Kortz, the marshalsman that was—
He parted hence but now, and I have cause
To wish his person seized without delay
And brought before me with all scrips, or scrolls,
That may be found upon him. Take my guard,
And see it done.

VAN RYK.

And bring him here, my lord ?

ARTEVELDE.

And bring him here.

[*Exit VAN RYK.*

ELENA.

What is it you suspect ?

ARTEVELDE.

The gold is French.

He has not lately had the means to thrive
By Flemish gold. He was a man disgraced.

CECILE.

You're right, my lord ; his talk was not of guilders ;
'Twas still of crowns and francs.

ELENA.

Nay, but from whence
Hath he French gold ?

ARTEVELDE.

From him whom France sent here
Doubtless to bring it,—from the Knight of Heurlée.

ELENA.

Oh, surely, surely not,—a man who came
With sacred mission clothed, to seek for peace
Under protection of a herald's office !
It were but common honesty—

ARTEVELDE.

My friend,
Say in what time hath honesty been common ?
Soft ! silence, I beseech you ; here's Van Ryk,
And he has found his man.

Enter VAN RYK, with VAN KORTZ, guarded.

Whom hast thou there, Van Ryk, thus manacled,
And what is his offence ?

VAN RYK.

My Lord, Van Kortz.

ARTEVELDE.

Van Kortz ! The gudgeon whom Sir Fleureant hired
To do French service, then betrayed, to save
His proper head ! Down, sir, upon thy knees,
And tell what wiles the crafty Frenchman used
To cheat thee of thy loyalty.

VAN KORTZ (*kneeling*).

My lord,

I tell the simple truth. Sir Fleureant sware
The paper which he charged me with for Ghent,
Was for his private ends, and nothing touched
The faith I owed your highness, and——

ARTEVELDE.

Van Ryk,

Bring me Sir Fleureant of Heurlée here.
Soft ye awhile !—what found you on Van Kortz ?

VAN RYK.

My lord, this paper, and a bag of money.

ARTEVELDE (*reading the paper*).

‘ Worthy masters of Ghent,—this is to make it known unto you, that we are hastily to come down into Flanders with a hundred thousand men, and with God’s help to replace our worthy cousin, Lois of Flanders, in his ancient estate and royalties,

reducing to his obedience all that be rightfully bound thereunto, and punishing the guilty. Wherefore we pray and counsel you, that at the receiving hereof, you return to your allegiance, and send to us in our army the heads of these following : that is to say, Jacob Maurenbrecker, John Stotler, and Ralph of Kerdell, which done, we shall receive all others whatsoever to our friendship, and promise by these presents that none, saving these only, shall be called to answer what is past.

' Written and sealed with the broad seal of France, in our host before Senlis, the 2nd day of October, in the year of grace 1382, by the king in his council.'

Stay, what is here ? an afterthought of mischief :

' You are to know that we have sent the like letters patent to the good towns of Bruges and Ypres, to which lest they reach not, we pray you to convey the contents hereof.'

Who are the messengers to Bruges and Ypres ?

VAN KORTZ.

Van Muck, my lord, to Bruges ; to Ypres, Bulsen.
They have set forth.

ARTEVELDE.

Convey him hence to prison.

Let fifty men be mounted—some pursue
Sir Fleureant of Heurlée, some Van Muck,
And others Bulsen, on the roads to France,
To Bruges and Ypres,—for the head of each
Proclaim a thousand florins—haste, Van Ryk !

[*Exit VAN RYK, with KORTZ, guarded.*

CECILE.

Oh Lord, the villain ! and he came to me
So proud and saucy ! Truly it is said
Give rope enough to rogues, they'll hang themselves.

ELENA.

And must he die, my lord ?

ARTEVELDE.

What plea can save him ?

CECILE.

That he should jeopardise his wilful head
Only for spite at me !

ELENA.

'Tis wonderful !

ARTEVELDE.

That Providence which makes the good take heed

To safety and success, contrariwise
Makes villains mostly reckless. Look on life,
And you shall see the crimes of blackest dye
So clumsily committed, by such sots,
So lost to thought, so scant of circumspection,
As shall constrain you to pronounce that guilt
Bedarkens and confounds the mind of man.

Human intelligence on murders bent
Becomes a midnight fumbler ; human will
Of God abandoned, in its web of snares
Strangles its own intent.

ELENA.

How fortunate
Was this man's malice thus conceived to thee,
My good Cecile ! All woman as I am,
I can forgive thy beauty, that hath bred
This love-engendered hate.

CECILE.

I thank you, madam.
The scornful knave ! to bring his gold to me
That never would have looked upon him twice,
Though he'd been made of gold !

ELENA.

How came you first

To give him that authority and rank,
Which late you took away?

ARTEVELDE.

Those are there here
That hardly will be governed save by men
Of fierce and forward natures. He was known
For daring deeds from childhood ; in his youth,
Famed for his great desire of doing evil,
He was elected into Testenoire's troop
Of free-companions : so in field or forest,
Or in walled town, by stipend lured, or vill
Surprised and sacked, by turns he lived at large,
And learned the vice indigenous to each.
Nought in dark corners of great cities done
Of lewdness or of outrage, was unknown
By him, or unpartaken ; nor the woods
Lodged in their loneliest caves a beast so wild.
The noise of strife and blows, the cry of murder,
Were to his ears indifferently common.
Thus grown at length more reckless than was safe
For his fraternity, they cast him off ;
And hanging loose upon the world what time
My name was noised abroad, he joined my camp.

Enter SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE.

SIR FLEUREANT.

So, my lord regent ! what is this I hear
Blown through the camp with trumpets ? what's my
head,
That you should price it higher than the sum
Of good repute for honourable dealing,
Which you must part withal to take it ? Much
I've heard of dangers in the Holy Land
Amongst the heathen and the infidel,
But never thought in Christendom to find
Such bloody breach of hospitable laws !

ARTEVELDE.

This is well spoken.

CECILE.

Oh, my lord, for that,
He's free enough and hardy with his tongue.
He told me to my face this very day
I was forswn.

ELENA.

Peace ! peace ! Cecile ; be silent.

ARTEVELDE.

What you have here delivered, sir, I say
Hath been well spoken : it remains to ask,
If that which you have perpetrated here
Hath been well done. Know you this writing ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

Yes.

I know it well ; 'twas by the king my master
Writ to the mayor and citizens of Ghent.

ARTEVELDE.

By you brought here ; by you to one Van Kortz
Delivered for despatch ; by him to me,
Upon his apprehension, yielded up.
Such is the story of these inky scratches,
Which were to scribble out the loyalty
Of three good towns, to soil the faith and courage
Of my best friends, and finally to blur
The record of my glory in the page
Of history past, and blot me from the future !
This was a worthy business.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Aye, my lord ;

Who shall gainsay the King of France his right
To send what letters, or what words he will,
To the good towns of Flanders ?

ARTEVELDE.

Let him try ;

And gainsay those that can my privilege
To hang the bearers. Thou, Sir Fleureant,
Hast by thy treachery betrayed thyself,
And unavoidably must suffer death.

Thou cam'st a sharer in a herald's office
Ensuing peace ; and cloaked in that disguise,
With money for thy purposes provided,
Thou hast bought treason. This may never pass
Unvisited with penalties extreme ;

Else what security is mine that faith
Is not put up to auction in my camp,
Till each man sell his brother ? Who provokes
Treason in others, to a traitor's death
Justly condemns himself. Such is thy lot :
Yet do I rue the judgment I pronounce,
And wish it undeserved ; for you have coloured
The darkness of your indirect attempts

With a more lively cheer and gallant bearing
Than most could brighten their best deeds withal.
Sir, I am sorry for you.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Spare your pity,

And use your power. You see before you one
Who would more willingly confront the worst
Unpitying power inflicts, than cry Gramercy !
I have been used to deem the loss of life
But as a dead man's loss, that feels it not.

ARTEVELDE.

You shall do well of mortal life to think
Thus slightly, and with serious thoughts prepare
For that which is celestial and to come.
Twixt this and daylight is your leisure time
For such purgation as you need. Cecile,
Send for some barefoot friar for the nonce,
And bid him come so stored and with such speed
As on a death-bed summons.

(*He steps to a door of the tent, and calls some soldiers of his guard.*)

CECILE.

Yes, my lord.

I'll go myself, and say what work awaits him.

SIR FLEUREANT.

And prithee, wench, find me a merry friar,
Who shall beguile the time.

CECILE.

A merry friar !

SIR FLEUREANT.

Aye, wench ; if any in the camp there are
They will be known to thee ; a hearty man ;
For I have ever looked on life and death,
The world which is and that which is to be,
With cheerful eyes, and hoped the best of both ;
And I would have death's usher wear a smile
As through the passage of to-night he leads me.
So send a merry friar.

ELENA.

Oh, sir knight !

If die you must so soon, for God's dear love
Take thought for your immortal soul's behoof !
Confess yourself and pass the night in prayer.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Confession will not hold us long ; I'm young,
And have not yet had time enough to act
Sins that are long in telling :

(*Then to ARTEVELDE, who returns with two soldiers of the guard.*)

You, my lord,
Cut short the catalogue betimes, I thank you.
To you, sweet lady, for your counsel kind
And monitory speech, my last poor prayers
I give,—more worth than thanks from dying men ;
And in your supplications of to-night
When you lie down to rest, I humbly crave
To be remembered in return.

ELENA.

Alas !

Would I could stead you more than with the prayers
Of such a sinful creature !

SIR FLEUREANT.

Soon, sweet lady,
You'll need them for yourself. This fair array
Of warlike multitudes you see around you,

Will sunder and dissolve, like wreaths of snow
Pelted and riddled with the rains in March.
Then should my lord of Bourbon find you here,
'Twill be a rude renounter ;—if at Bruges
You found a lover in an enemy,
The tables will be turned at Oudenarde,
And in a lover shall you find a foe.
I pray you think upon it.

ARTEVELDE.

Fare you well.

These will conduct you to your place of rest,
And all your needs or wishes may require
To make the night pass easily, supply.
Again, sir, fare you well.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord, farewell.

I hardly know what words should thank your bounty
That grants me every thing—except my life.

[*Exit guarded.*

ELENA.

Oh, would my lord that you could grant him that !
He is a gallant gentleman.

ARTEVELDE.

He's stricken ;

Which makes the meanest hold his courage high
In presence of his lady : notwithstanding,
He is a brave and very noble knight,
And nothing moves me in his favour more
Than what he spake to you. I'm grieved, in truth,
That stern necessity demands his death.
No more of that.—
The world declares us lovers, you have heard.

ELENA.

My lord ?

ARTEVELDE.

The world, when men and women meet,
Is rich in sage remark, nor stint to strew
With roses and with myrtle fields of death.
Think you that they will grow ?

ELENA.

My lord, your pardon ;
You speak in such enigmas, I am lost,
And cannot comprehend you.

ARTEVELDE.

Do I so ?

That was not wont to be my fault. In truth
There is a season when the plainest men
Will cease to be plain-spoken ; for their thoughts
Plunge deep in labyrinths of flowers and thorns,
And very rarely to the light break through,
Whilst much they wander darkling. Yet for once
Let love be marshalled by the name of love,
To meet such entertainment as he may.

ELENA.

I have been much unfortunate, my lord ;
I would not love again.

ARTEVELDE.

And so have I ;
Nor man nor woman more unfortunate,
As none more blessed in what was taken from him !
Dearest Elena,—of the living dearest,—
Let my misfortunes plead, and know their weight
By knowing of the worth of what I lost.
She was a creature framed by love divine
For mortal love to muse a life away
In pondering her perfections ; so unmoved
Amidst the world's contentions, if they touched
No vital chord nor troubled what she loved,

Philosophy might look her in the face,
And like a hermit stooping to the well
That yields him sweet refreshment, might therein
See but his own serenity reflected
With a more heavenly tenderness of hue !
Yet whilst the world's ambitious empty cares,
Its small disquietudes and insect stings
Disturbed her never, she was one made up
Of feminine affections, and her life
Was one full stream of love from fount to sea.
Such was her inward being, which to fit
With answerable grace of outward favour,
Nature bestowed corporeal beauty bright,
Framed in such mood of passionate conception
As when the Godhead, from a dream of love
Awaking, with poetic rapture seized,
Substantiates the vision, and the form
His dreaming fancy feigned, creates alive.
These are but words.

ELENA.

My lord, they're full of meaning.

ARTEVELDE.

No, they mean nothing—that which they would speak

Sinks into silence—’tis what none can know
That knew not her—the silence of the grave—
Whence could I call her radiant beauty back,
It could not come more savouring of Heaven
Than it went hence—the tomb received her charms
In their perfection, with nor trace of time
Nor stain of sin upon them; only death
Had turned them pale. I would that you had seen her
Alive or dead.

ELENA.

I wish I had, my lord ;
I should have loved to look upon her much ;
For I can gaze on beauty all day long,
And think the all-day long is but too short.

ARTEVELDE

She was so fair that in the angelic choir
She will not need put on another shape
Than that she bore on earth. Well, well,—she’s gone,
And I have tamed my sorrow. Pain and grief
Are transitory things no less than joy,
And though they leave us not the men we were,
Yet they do leave us. You behold me here
A man bereaved, with something of a blight

Upon the early blossoms of his life
And its first verdure, having not the less
A living root, and drawing from the earth
Its vital juices, from the air its powers :
And surely as man's health and strength are whole
His appetites regerminate, his heart
Re-opens, and his objects and desires
Shoot up renewed. What blank I found before me
From what is said you partly may surmise ;
How I have hoped to fill it, may I tell ?

ELENA.

I fear, my lord, that cannot be.

ARTEVELDE.

Indeed !

Then am I doubly hopeless. What is gone,
Nor plaints, nor prayers, nor yearnings of the soul,
Nor memory's tricks nor fancy's invocations,—
Though tears went with them frequent as the rain
In dusk November, sighs more sadly breathed
Than winter's o'er the vegetable dead,—
Can bring again : and should this living hope,
That like a violet from the other's grave
Grew sweetly, in the tear-besprinkled soil

Finding moist nourishment—this seedling sprung
Where recent grief had like a ploughshare passed
Through the soft soul, and loosened its affections—
Should this new-blossomed hope be coldly nipped,
Then were I desolate indeed ! a man
Whom heaven would wean from earth, and nothing
leaves

But cares and quarrels, trouble and distraction,
The heavy burthens and the broils of life.
Is such my doom ? Nay, speak it, if it be.

ELENA.

I said I feared another could not fill
The place of her you lost, being so fair
And perfect as you give her out.

ARTEVELDE.

'Tis true,
A perfect woman is not as a coin,
Which being gone, its very duplicate
Is counted in its place. Yet waste so great
Might you repair, such wealth you have of charms
Luxuriant, albeit of what were her's
Rather the contrast than the counterpart.
Colour to wit—complexion ;—her's was light

And gladdening ; a roseate tincture shone
Transparent in its place, her skin elsewhere
White as the foam from which in happy hour
Sprang the Thalassian Venus : your's is clear
But bloodless, and though beautiful as night
In cloudless ether clad, not frank as day :
Such is the tinct of your diversity ;
Serenely radiant she, you darkly fair.

ELENA.

Dark still has been the colour of my fortunes,
And having not serenity of soul,
How should I wear the aspect ?

ARTEVELDE.

Wear it not ;

Wear only that of love.

ELENA.

Of love ? alas !

That is its opposite. You counsel me
To scatter this so melancholy mist
By calling up the hurricane. Time was
I had been prone to counsel such as yours ;
Adventurous I have been, it is true,
And this foolhardy heart would brave—nay court,
In other days, an enterprise of passion ;

Yea, like a witch, would whistle for a whirlwind.
But I have been admonished : painful years
Have tamed and taught me : I have suffered much.
Kind Heaven but grant tranquillity ! I seek
No further boon.

ARTEVELDE.

And may not love be tranquil ?

ELENA.

It may in some ; but not as I have known it.

ARTEVELDE.

Love, like an insect frequent in the woods,
Will take the colour of the tree it feeds on ;
As saturnine or sanguine is the soul,
Such is the passion. Brightly upon me,
Like the red sunset of a stormy day,
Love breaks anew beneath the gathering clouds
That roll around me ! Tell me, sweet Elena,
May I not hope, or rather can I hope,
That for such brief and bounded space of time
As are my days on earth, you'll yield yourself
To love me living and to mourn me dead ?

ELENA.

Oh, not, my lord, to mourn you—why—oh God !
Why will you say so ? You distress me—no—

You will pursue your triumphs many a year,
And victory shall wait upon your steps
As heretofore, and death be distant far.

Take back those words ; I cannot bear them ; no,
They hang upon my heart too heavily,
Tell me you're sure to conquer, as you are.

ARTEVELDE.

So, loveliest, let us hope. It may be so.
I'll swear it shall be, so you'll swear in turn
To give me up your heart.

ELENA.

I cannot—no—

I cannot give you what you've had so long ;
Nor need I tell you what you know so well.
I must be gone.

ARTEVELDE.

Nay, sweetest, why these tears ?

ELENA.

No, let me go—I cannot tell—no—no—
I want to be alone—let me retire—
Dear Artevelde, for God's love let me go ! [Exit.

ARTEVELDE (*after a pause*).

The night is far advanced upon the morrow,

And but for that conglomerated mass
Of cloud with ragged edges, like a mound
Or black pine-forest on a mountain's top,
Wherein the light lies ambushed, dawn were near.—
Yes, I have wasted half a summer's night.
Was it well spent? Successfully it was.
How little flattering is a woman's love!—
Worth to the heart, come how it may, a world;
Worth to men's measures of their own deserts,
If weighed in wisdom's balance, merely nothing.
The few hours left are precious—who is there?
Ho! Nieuverkerchen;—when we think upon it,
How little flattering is a woman's love!
Given commonly to whosoe'er is nearest
And propped with most advantage; outward grace
Nor inward light is needful; day by day,
Men wanting both are mated with the best
And loftiest of God's feminine creation,
Whose love takes no distinction but of gender,
And ridicules the very name of choice.
Ho! Nieuverkerchen!—what, then, do we sleep?
Are none of you awake?—and as for me,
The world says Philip is a famous man—

What is there women will not love, so taught?
Ho ! Ellert ! by your leave though, you must wake.

Enter an OFFICER.

Have me a gallows built upon the mount,
And let Van Kortz be hung at break of day.
No news of Bulsen, or Van Muck ?

OFFICER.

My lord,
Bulsen is taken ; but Van Muck, we fear,
Has got clear off.

ARTEVELDE.

Let Bulsen, too, be hung
At break of day. Let there be priests to shrive them.
Who guards the knight, Sir Fleureant of Heurlée ?

OFFICER.

Sasbout, my lord, and Tuning.

ARTEVELDE.

Very well.

Mount me a messenger ; I shall have letters
To send to Van den Bosch upon the Lis.
Let Grebber wait upon me here. Go thou

Upon thine errands. [*Exit OFFICER.*]—So, Van Muck escaped !

And Ypres will receive its invitation.

I think, then, Van den Bosch must spare a force
To strengthen us at Ypres for a season.

I'll send him orders. And Van Muck the traitor !
Stupidity is seldom soundly honest ;—
I should have known him better. Live and learn !

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

The interior of a Tent. SIR FLEUREANT OF HEUR-LÉE is seated at a table, on which wine and refreshments are placed. Guards are seen without, walking backwards and forwards before the doors of the Tent.

SIR FLEUREANT.

I oft before have clomb to tickle places,
But this will be the last of all my climbing.
Were it to do again, ten thousand dukes,
With all their wants of wit and wealth of folly,

Should tempt me not to such fool-hardihood.
Here is the end of Fleureant of Heurlée !
I know it ; for my heart is dead already—
An omen that did cross me ne'er before
In any jeopardy of life.

CECILE *enters with a Friar,*

This wind
Is cold, methinks, that comes through yonder door.
I thought I had a cloak.

CECILE.

The friar, sir.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Well, this is strange ;—I surely had a cloak.

CECILE.

Sir, would you see the friar ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

Eh ? what ? who ?

CECILE.

The friar, sir.

SIR FLEUREANT.

What friar ?—oh, your pardon !

What ? is it time ?

FRIAR.

This wench, my son, brought word
That you would fain confess yourself o'ernight ;
And then make merry, like a noble heart,
Till break of day that brings your latter end.

SIR FLEUREANT.

What is't o'clock ?

CECILE.

An hour or two, no more,
Past midnight.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Yes, I wished myself confessed ;
But, by your leave, not now ;—my eyes are heavy,
And I was fain to wrap me in my cloak,
And lay me down to sleep, as you came in.
I think I had a cloak.

CECILE.

'Tis here, sir, here.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Ah, there it is. The air, I think, is chilly.

FRIAR.

'Tis a cold air, my son, a cold and dry ;
But here's an element that's hot and moist
To keep the other out. I drink your health.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My health ! ha, ha ! I'll lie me down and sleep,
For I've a mortal weariness upon me.

[*He lies down.*

My body's or my soul's health do you drink ?

FRIAR.

I drink, sir, to your good repose.

SIR FLEUREANT.

I thank you ;

I shall sleep sound to-morrow.

CECILE.

Put this cushion

Under your head.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Ah, you are kind, wench, now ;
You're not so saucy as you were. So,—there.

FRIAR.

And this I drink to your dear soul's salvation.

CECILE.

I'd tend you all night long, with all my heart,
If it might do you good.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Good night, good night. [*He sleeps.*

FRIAR.

What, doth he sleep ? Then sit you down, my maid,
 And quaff me off this flask of Malvoisie.
 Come sunrise, and he'll lay his curly head
 Upon a harder pillow—So it is !

*'As a man lives so shall he die,
 As a tree falls so shall it lie.'*

Take off thy glass, my merry wench of all ;
 Thou know'st the song that Jack the headsman sings—

'Tis never to snivel and grovel
 When a friend wants a turn of poor Jack's,
 But put him to bed with a shovel,
 Having cut off his head with an axe.
 Having
 Cut off his head with an axe.

CECILE.

Be not so loud, good friar, let him sleep.
 He'll pass the time more easy.

FRIAR.

Let him sleep !

What hinders him to sleep ?—not I, my lass ;
 I've shriven many a sinner for the gallows ;

There's nothing wakes them but a lusty tug.
I'd rather he should sleep than you, sweet wench ;
So this to keep you wakeful—Ah, you fat-ribs !

CECILE.

Begone, you filthy friar ! At your tricks
With here a dead man lying, one may say,
Amongst one's feet !

FRIAR.

Who's dead, my merry soul ?
Not I, nor near it by these twenty years.
I've life and mettle in me yet, my woman,
For twenty summers—ah ! thou know'st they say
An old dog biteth sore.

CECILE.

Out ! ancient blotch !
Touch me again, and I will scream so loud
That all the camp shall hear.

Enter ARTEVELDE.

ARTEVELDE (*stumbling against SIR FLEUREANT, who wakes and sits up*).
So, what is this ? what wrangle ye about ?
What mak'st thou, friar, with the wench ?

FRIAR.

Who, I?

CECILE.

Aye, tell his highness how you'd use a maid!

FRIAR.

Alack! we churchmen, sir, have much ado!

We are but men, and women will be women.

Fie, they are naughty jades!—sluts all! sluts all!

Fie, how they steal upon our idle hours!

CECILE.

Thou liest, thou scandalous friar——

ARTEVELDE.

Soft you, Cecile!

FRIAR.

Oh, she's a light-skirts!—yea, and at this present

A little, as you see, concerned with liquor.

Fie! she's as common as a barber's chair.

CECILE.

I common! If it were not for thy cowl

I have that lesson at my fingers' ends

Should teach thee how to lay thy lecherous sins

Upon an honest maid.

ARTEVELDE.

Peace, peace, I say !

I would discourse some matters with this knight.
Leave us together. Friar, go thy ways ;
Thy hands are not too clean. I know the wench ;
She would not tempt thee. Get thee gone, I say.

FRIAR.

My lord, the peace of God be with your highness,
And with this knight, and with that sinful woman.

[*Exit.*

CECILE.

Mouldy old smell-feast !

ARTEVELDE.

Ease thy mind elsewhere,

My pretty wench ; I must have private speech
Of the French knight.

CECILE.

Good even to your highness.

[*Exit.*

ARTEVELDE.

Good night, Cecile.—Sir, I disturbed your rest ;
I saw not that you lay there.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Oh, my lord,

It matters not ; to-morrow I shall lie

Where you will not disturb me.

ARTEVELDE.

So you think.

SIR FLEUREANT.

So you, my lord, have said.

ARTEVELDE.

You stand condemned.

Yet 'tis a word that I would fain unsay.

SIR FLEUREANT.

You are most kind, my lord ; the word went always

You were a merciful man and fearing God,

And God is good to such and prospers them ;

And if my life it please you now to spare,

You may find mercy for yourself in straits

According as you show it.

ARTEVELDE.

Nay, thy life

Is justly forfeited : and if I spare thee

It is not that I look for God's reward

In sparing crime ; since justice is most mercy.

Thou hast an intercessor, to whose prayers
I grant thy life, absolving thee, not freely,
But on conditions.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Whatsoe'er they be
I will be bound most solemnly by oath
So God be my salvation, to fulfil them.

ARTEVELDE.

'Tis but to pay thy debt of gratitude
To her whose charity redeems thy life,
That I would bind thee. At the supplication
Of thy lord's sometime lady thou art spared.

SIR FLEUREANT.

I'm bound to her for ever.

ARTEVELDE.

Sometime hence
Mischances may befall her. Though I trust,
And with good reason, that my arms are proof,
Yet is the tide of war unsteady ever;
And should my hope be wrecked upon some reef
Of adverse fortune, there is cause to fear
Her former lord, thy master, who suspects
Uneasily her faith, in victory's pride

Would give his vengeance and his jealousy
Free way to her destruction. In such hour,
Should it arrive, thou might'st befriend the lady,
As in thy present peril she doth thee.

SIR FLEUREANT.

I were ungrateful past all reach of words
That speak of baseness and ingratitude,
Should I not hold my life, and heart, and service,
Purely at her behest from this time forth.
And truly in conjunctures such as those
Your highness hath foreseen, to aid her flight
Were service which no Fleming could perform,
How true soe'er his heart,—and yet to me
It were an easy task.

ARTEVELDE.

I trust the day
Will never come, that asks such service from you.
But should it so, I charge you on your faith
And duty as a knight, perform it stoutly.
Prudence, meantime, demands that you remain
In close confinement.

SIR FLEUREANT.

As you please, my lord.

ARTEVELDE (*after a pause*).

What, watch there, ho !

Enter two Guards.

You will give passage to Sir Fleureant
To go at large. My mind, you see, is changed.
It ever was my way, and shall be still,
When I do trust a man, to trust him wholly.
You shall not quit my camp ; but that word given,
You are at large within it.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Sir, your trust

Shall not appear misplaced.

ARTEVELDE.

Give you good rest !

And better dreams than those I woke you from.

SIR FLEUREANT.

With grateful heart I say, my lord, God keep you !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

YPRES.

*The BURGOMASTER of Ypres, with several BURGHERS
of the French faction, and VAN MUCK.*

BURGOMASTER.

Well, well, God bless us ! have a care—oh me !
Be careful how you speak ; wear a white hat ;
And ever mind'st thou, when thou see'st Vauclaire,
Uncover and stand back.

VAN MUCK.

I will, your worship.

BURGOMASTER.

Nay, but you must. And Roosdyk—speak him fair :
For give him but a saucy word, he's out,
And twinkling me his dagger in the sun,
Says, ‘ take you that,’ and you are dead for good.

VAN MUCK.

I'll speak him fair.

BURGOMASTER.

Nay, but I say you shall.

'Tis a good rule to be more civil-spoken
Than wantonly be cut and stabbed for nothing.

VAN MUCK.

'Tis so, your worship.

BURGOMASTER.

Cast not away your life.

VAN MUCK.

'Tis as your worship pleases.

FIRST BURGHER.

But if Vauclaire, or Roosdyk, or the captains
Should ask him whence he comes, or what's his craft,
Being strange-looking for a citizen,
What should he answer?

BURGOMASTER.

Say thou com'st from Dinand—
From Dinand, say, to sell Dinandery,
Pots, pitchers, mugs and beakers, and the like.

VAN MUCK.

Suppose I'm questioned where they are.

BURGOMASTER.

You've sold 'em.

Say you praise God. Say you're a thriving man.

FIRST BURGHER (*aside to second*).

This matter will be out.

SECOND BURGHER.

Why so?

FIRST BURGHER.

Good friend,

Didst ever know a secret to lie close
Under a goose's wing?

SECOND BURGHER.

I think 'twill out.

'Twill surely out.

FIRST BURGHER.

The frightened fox sits fast,
Folly with fear will flutter still and cackle.
(*Aloud.*) This will be known. I am for rising now,
Slaying Vauclaire and Roosdyk in their beds
Before they nose it, sounding through the streets
King Charles's pardon and the town's submission,
And so to present issue with it all.

BURGOMASTER.

Mercy ! what foolishness will young men talk !

FIRST BURGHER.

Under your favour—old men too at times.

THIRD BURGHER.

De Vry, a word. I marvel at thy rashness ;
We are not ripe for action : in a week,
Perchance a day—nay, it may be this hour,
Or Van den Bosch will conquer at Commines,
Or the French force the passage. If the first,
In vain were this revolt, for Van den Bosch
Would quell us in a trice ; and if the second,
Then were the time to rise, for all the town
Would then rise with us.

SECOND BURGHER.

In good time, Verstolken ;
The axe's edge is turned toward us now,
And what shall save us, if this mooncalf here
Should let his errand out ?

VAN MUCK.

Call you me mooncalf ?
I am an honest man ; I dare you, sir,
To signify me other.

SECOND BURGHER.

Hold thy peace.

Whilst the French king is looked for at Commines,
Too wise is Van den Bosch to break his strength
With sending soldiers hither. He but counts
Nine thousand men.

FOURTH BURGHER.

The double were too few
To be divided.

FIFTH BURGHER.

Less than some two thousand
Would hardly march on Ypres, should we thrive ;
And if they did, we'd bowl them down like nine-pins.

SECOND BURGHER.

He'll never waste his forces upon us
Whilst the French king's to come ; and then the news
Of Ypres fallen off, will cheer the French,
Sicken the White-Hoods, and make sure the loss
Of that famed passage, which shall magnify
Our merits with King Charles.

Enter a SIXTH BURGHER.

SIXTH BURGHER.

Away, away !

Vauclaire has word of all you do ; a troop,
Despatched by Van den Bosch to give him aid
Is riding into town. Van Muck's commission
Is whispered of, and loudly.

BURGOMASTER.

There now, there !

I told you so—I told you this would come ;
But still you talked of rising. Run, Van Muck,
Thou villain run, and be not seen abroad
With honest citizens.

SECOND BURGHER.

Aye, get thee hence ;
Best quit the town, and make thy way to France.

VAN MUCK.

I will, your worships.

[*Exit, but returns immediately.*

Please you, sir, the street
Is full of men-at-arms that come this way.

BURGOMASTER.

I said so ; there ! and still you hearkened not !
Oh Holy Ghost ! Oh wala-wa ! Oh me !

THIRD BURGHER.

What shall we do ?

SECOND BURGHER.

Van Muck, stand fast ; they come :
It is Vauclaire himself.

BURGOMASTER.

Say you sell pots.

*Enter VAUCLAIRE and ROOSDYK, followed by a troop
of Men-at-arms.*

VAUCLAIRE.

Ah, Master Burgomaster, here you are !

ROOSDYK.

Make fast the doors.

VAUCLAIRE.

And thou, Verstolken—nay !
Here's Goswin Hex, and Drimmelen, and Breero !
And thou, De Vry—Van Rosendaal, and thou !
How rare a thing is faith ! Alas, my masters !
Here is a work you put me to !

ROOSDYK.

Stand forth,
Master Van Muck ? where are you ?—which is he ?

THIRD BURGHER.

What is it, sirs, you charge us with ?

ROOSDYK.

What think ye?

Say treason, and I'll call you conjurors.

VAUCLAIRE.

I have my orders—stand thou forth, Van Muck—
And I must needs obey them. Say, what art thou ?

ROOSDYK.

A villain.

VAN MUCK.

No, sirs, I am not a villain.

I am a travelling trader ; I sell pots.

ROOSDYK.

Thyself—thou sell'st thyself—a precious vessel !
Where is the provost marshal? Hark you, sir !
Put irons on them all, and give Van Muck
A taste of what you have.

BURGOMASTER.

Hold off ! what's this ?

I am your master.

ROOSDYK.

Knock him on the head ;

Bid him be patient.

VAUCLAIRE.

I am amazed at this !

So sweetly as you all demeaned yourselves !
A guileful world we live in ! God forgive us !
Make fast the gyves, and take them off to prison.

BURGOMASTER.

Sirs, hear me !—oh !

ROOSDYK.

Gag me this grey-beard !

BURGOMASTER.

Oh !

FIRST BURGHER.

Thank God !

VAUCLAIRE.

The Stadt-house. You shall all be heard
Except Van Muck, whose treason is too rank
To be excused. I must obey my orders ;
First to the rack they doom him, then to the gallows.

VAN MUCK.

Sirs, grant me mercy ; I am not a traitor ;
I'll tell it all.

ROOSDYK.

That shall you, or the rack
Is not so good a singing master now
As it was wont to be.

VAN MUCK.

Oh Lord ! oh Lord !

(*He is taken out.*)

VAUCLAIRE.

Bring them away : we'll hear them at the Stadt-house,
Each by himself. Bring them away at once ;
Keep them apart, and let them not have speech
One of another.

ROOSDYK.

If any man make signs,
Despatch him on the spot. Master Vauclaire,
We follow you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

THE FRENCH COURT AT ARRAS.

An antechamber in the Maison de Ville. TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET, clerk of the council, and SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLEE.

SIR FLEUREANT.

When I forgive him, may the stars rain down
And pierce me with ten thousand points of fire !
His whore ! his leman !

LESTOVET.

Had she been his wife,
A small transgression might have passed. Learn thou
To keep thy hands from meddling with men's whores ;
For dubious rights are jealously enforced,
And what men keep for pleasure is more precious
Than what need is they keep.

SIR FLEUREANT.

He'll be the worse,
And knows it. When I fled I left behind
A notion of my purpose. There's none here
Can know like me his weakness and his strength.

Let but the council hear me ; I shall tell
What shall be worth to them ten thousand spears.

LESTOVET.

'Tis now their time to meet ; but the young king
Lies long abed. Here comes my Lord of Burgundy.

Enter DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

BURGUNDY.

Good-morrow, sirs, good-morrow ! So, your stars,
They tell me, are your good friends still, good Flurry ;
You always come clear off ;—well, I'm glad on't.

SIR FLEUREANT.

I give your highness thanks.

BURGUNDY.

So, so, Lestovet,
My brother of Bourbon keeps his mind, they say ;
He is for Tournay still ; 'tis wonderful,
A man of sense to be so much besotted !

LESTOVET.

His grace of Bourbon, sir, is misdirected ;
He is deluded by a sort of men
That should know better.

BURGUNDY.

They shall rue it dearly.

To turn aside ten leagues, ten Flemish leagues,
With sixty thousand men ! 'tis moonish madness !

LESTOVET.

Sir Fleureant here, who left the rebel camp
No longer past than Wednesday, says their strength
Lies wholly eastward of the Scheldt.

SIR FLEUREANT.

The towns

Betwixt the Scheldt and Lis, your grace should know,
Are shaking to their steeple-tops with fear
Of the French force ; and westward of the Lis
You need but blow a trumpet, and the gates
Of Ypres, Poperinguen, Rousselaere,
And Ingelmunster, gape to take you in.

BURGUNDY.

They are my words ; they are my very words ;
Twenty times over have I told my brother
Those towns would join us if he would but let them ;
But he's as stubborn as a mule ; and oh !
That constable ! Oh, Oliver of Clisson !
That such a man as thou, at such a time,

Should hold the staff of constable of France !

Well ! such men are !

LESTOVET.

My lord, I crave your pardon
For so exorbitantly shooting past
My line of duty as to tender words
Of counsel to your highness ; but my thoughts
Will out, and I have deemed that with his grace
Your royal brother, you have dealt too shortly.
The noble frankness of your nature breaks
Too suddenly upon the minds of men
That love themselves, and with a jealous love
Are wedded to their purposes : not only
His grace of Bourbon, but full many lords
Who bear a part against you in the council,
Would yield upon a gentle provocation,
That stiffen with a rougher.

BURGUNDY.

That may be ;
But, Lestovet, to sue to them to turn !
I cannot do it.

LESTOVET.

May it please your grace

To leave it in my hands. With easier ear
They listen to a man of low condition ;
And under forms that in your grace to use
It were unseemly, I can oft approach,
And with a current that themselves perceive not
Can turn the tenour of their counsels.

BURGUNDY.

Nay;

But how can I be absent from the board
At such a time as this ?

LESTOVET.

A seizure, say,
Of sudden illness. They'll be here anon,—
I think I hear them now.

SIR FLEUREANT.

There is a sound
Of horses' feet below us.

BURGUNDY.

Well, Lestovet,
You are a wise and wary man ; this day
I leave the field to you ; say that the gout
Confines me to my chamber.

LESTOVET.

Hark, my lord,

They come.

BURGUNDY.

Farewell to you ; improve your time.

[*Exit.*

LESTOVET.

Ha ! ha ! the council ! they are men of spirit.
Arouse their passions, and they'll have opinions ;
Leave them but cool, they know not what to think.

SIR FLEUREANT.

You'll tell them I am here.

LESTOVET.

Before they rise
You shall be heard at large ; but leave to me
To choose the fitting moment. Hide without
Until the Usher have a sign : the mace
Shall trundle from the board, which he shall hear ;
Then come at once as one that from his horse
Leaps down, and reeking hurries in to tell
A tale that will not wait.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

The King is brought in by the Duke of Bourbon, and seated on a Chair of State at the head of the Board; three seats are placed below, on two of which the Dukes of Bourbon and Berry place themselves. The other Councillors then enter, and take their seats in succession, to the number of twelve; to wit, Sir Oliver of Clisson, Constable of France; Sir John of Vien, Admiral of France; the Lord of Coucy, Sir William of Poictiers, Sir Aymenon of Pumiers, the Bastard of Langres, Sir Raoul of Raneval, the Lord of St. Just, the Lord of Saimpi, Sir Maurice of Tressiquidy, Sir Lois of Sanxere, and the Begue of Villaines. A desk is placed opposite the lower end of the Board, at which is seated Tristram of Lestovet, Clerk of the Council.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

My brother of Burgundy is sick to-day;
Your majesty excuses his attendance,

THE KING.

We do.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Save him, our number is complete.

Sir Oliver of Clisson, unto thee,
By virtue of thine office, appertaineth,
More than to any here, to point the course
Of the king's armies : wherefore he desires
Thou open this day's business.

THE KING.

'Tis our will.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

May it please your majesty—my lords, and you !
So much was said on Friday of the choice
'Twixt Lille and Tournay—that the more direct,
And this, 'tis justly held, the safer road—
That I should waste your patience and your time,
Did I detain you long. To Lille, my lords,
Were two days' journey ; thence to Warneston
Were one day, let or hindrance coming none ;
But should the rains continue, and the Deule—

THE KING.

What ails my Lord of Burgundy, good uncle ?

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

The gout, sweet cousin. May it please your grace
To hearken to the Constable.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

My lords,

If with these luckless rains the Deule be flooded,
As there is cause to think it is already,
From Armentières to Quesnoy, and the Marque
Be also fuller than its wont, what days
Should bring us to the Lis were hard to tell.
But grant we reach so far, all over-passed
Without mishap the intervening waters,
The bridges on the Upper Lis, we know,
Are broken down ; and on the further shore
Lies Van den Bosch—and where are we to pass ?
I put it to you, where are we to pass ?
How do we cross the Lis ?

THE LORD OF SAIMPI.

May it please your grace,
I would be bold to ask the Constable
Hath not the Lis a source ?

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

Yea, one or more.

THE LORD OF SAIMPI.

Why, then it may be crossed.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

My Lord of Saimpi,

Surely it may be crossed, if other ways
Present no better hope. My lords, ye all
Have voices in the council ; speak your minds,
And God forefend that any words of mine
Should blind your better judgments.

SIR AYMENON OF PUMIERS.

Higher up,

A few leagues south, by Venay and St. Venant,
The Lis is fordable, and is not kept.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Not kept, my lords ! why should it ? Van den Bosch
Were doubtless overjoyed to see us strike,
Amidst the drenching of these torrents, deep
Into the lands of Cassel and Vertus ;
An English force, for aught we know, the while
Borne like a flock of wild geese o'er the seas,
And dropped at Dunkirk. On the left are they,
The Flemings on the right ; strong towns in front ;
And so we plunge from clammy slough to slough,
With fog and flood around us.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

Yea, wet-footed.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

What say you ?

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

For the love of God, my lords,
Keep we dry feet. Rheumatic pains, catarrhs,
And knotty squeezings of the inward man,
Thus may we fly the taste of.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Soft, Sir Lois ;

Spare us thy gibes ; I've stood more winters' nights
Above my knees in mire, than thou hast hairs
Upon the furnished outside of thy skull.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

I say, my lords, take heed of mists and swamps ;
Eschew rain water ; think on winter nights ;
Beware the Flemish on the Lis ; beware
The English, that are in much strength—at London.
Ye've brought the king to Arras in November,
And now ye find that in November rain
Is wont to fall ; ye find that fallen rain
Swells rivers and makes floods ; whereof advised,

Take the king back with all convenient speed,
And shut him up at Senlis.

THE KING.

Hold, Sir Lois ;

I will not go.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

I crave your grace's pardon ;
I little dreamed you would ; you are a man.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Lois of Sanxere, I ask thee in this presence,
Fling'st thou these girds at me ?

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

My lords, my lords !

I do beseech you to bethink yourselves.

Remember where ye are.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL (*drawing off his glove*).

Lois of Sanxere—

(*Here TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET, in arranging some parchments, touches the mace, which rolls heavily from the table, and falls close to the feet of SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL. He starts up.*)

LESTOVET.

No hurt, my lord, I hope ? Thank God ! thank God !

Most humbly do I sue to you, my lord,
To grant me your forgiveness.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Nay, tis nothing ;
It might have been a bruise, but——

Enter an USHER, followed by SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE.

USHER.

Please your grace,
Sir Fleureant of Heurlée waits without,
Hot from the Flemish camp, which he but left
Two days agone, and he can tell your grace
How all things stand in Flanders.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Now we'll see !
This is an apt arrival ; welcome, sir !
What is the news you bring us ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

Please your grace,
The letters patent I sought means to send
To Ypres, Ghent, and Bruges ; but to the first

Only they reached in safety, though from thence
Doubtless the terms have spread. The regent, warned
Of what was machinated, as I hear,
Sent orders to the Lis for Van den Bosch
To split his power, and throw a third to Ypres
To fortify Vauclaire ; whilst he stood fast,
But held himself prepared, if Bruges should rise
Or Ghent, to drop adown the Lis to Heule,
Or Desselghem, or Rosebecque, there to join
The regent's force, that then should raise the siege
Of Oudenarde, and gather on the Lis.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

These are good tidings ; yet I deem the Lis
Is still too strongly guarded for our force
There to make way.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Your grace is ever just
In all your views.

THE BEGUE OF VILLAINES.

Sir Constable, some thought
Let us bestow on tidings whence we learn
The fears o' the adverse, and the slide this way
Of Ypres, Ghent, and Bruges.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Should these towns turn,
 A larger force the regent were constrained
 To keep i' the west ; and passing down the Scheldt
 By Tournay, we are less opposed.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

Not so.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

I say we meet with opposition less
 Upon the Scheldt at Tournay.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

I say, no.

Turning our faces from these doubting towns,
 What can they but fall back ?

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Wilt have it so ?

Methinks, my lords, if turning and backsliding
 And lack of loyalty——

LESTOVET (*to SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE*).

Hilloa, sir, ho !

You cannot go, you must not quit the board ;
 My lords will further question you anon.
 Spake you not of the Scheldt ? doubtless my lords
 Would hear you upon that.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Aye, aye, the Scheldt;

What say'st thou of the Scheldt?

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lords, your pardon;

With my own eyes I have not viewed the Scheldt

Higher than Oudenarde; yet what I know

More sure than common rumour I may tell,

That reach by reach from Elsegem to Kam,

At sundry stations, say Kerckhoven first,

'Twixt Berkhem and Avelghem, where the Ronne

Its tide contributes elbowing Escanaffe,

At Pontespiers and Pecq, and divers points

Betwixt them interposed, strong piles are driven

Deep in the belly of the stream athwart.

Thus neither up nor down can make their way

Boat, raft, nor caravel.

THE BASTARD OF LANGRES.

We see, my lords,

The Scheldt is no purveyor of our victual

Should we proceed by Tournay.

THE LORD OF SAIMPI.

I surmise

We shall find spears as thick upon the banks
As stakes within the stream.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Then let us find them !

Who is it now that flinches and postpones ?
I say, once passed the Scheldt, and better far
We should confront the Flemish spears ; so be it !
We'd give the villains such a taste of France
That thence for evermore ‘ Mount Joye St. Denis’
Should be a cry to make their life-blood freeze
And teach rebellion duty.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

Fee, faw, fum !

LESTOVET.

Sir John de Vien would speak ; sir John de Vien
Hath not yet spoken.

SIR JOHN DE VIEN.

Here we lie, my lords,
At Arras still, disputing. I am a man
Of little fruitfulness in words ; the days
That we lie here, my lords, I deem ill spent.
Once and again the time of year is told,
That we are in November ; whiles we vex

This theme, what follows ?—why, December ! True,
The time of year is late, my lords ; yea truly,
The fall of the year, I say, my lords, November,
Is a late season when it rains, my lords ;
I have not, as you know, the gift of speech,
But thus much may a plain man say,—time flies ;
The English are a people deft, my lords,
And sudden in the crossing of the seas ;
And should we linger here with winter coming,
We were not called good men of war, forsooth.
So truly, sirs, my voice, with humbleness,
Is for short counsel ; in good truth, my lords—

THE KING.

Dear uncle, what's o'clock ?

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

'Tis noon, sweet cousin.

THE KING.

I want my dinner.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Presently, fair cousin.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

Your majesty is of the admiral's mind ;
You love short counsel ; marry, and of mine ;

I love it too; more specially I love it
With mallets at our backs and winter near.
We talk so long that what is said at first
What follows sponges from our memories.
Pass to the vote, my lords, nor waste your breath
In further talk.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON

Then pass we to the vote.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

So be it; to the vote.

OTHERS.

Agreed: to the vote.

LESTOVET.

My lords, may it please you, ere your votes I gather
That briefly I rehearse what each hath said,
As noted with a hasty pen, or writ
In a weak memory.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

So, do, Lestovet.

LESTOVET.

First, my lord constable: he bade you think
What length of way and waters lay between
Ere you could reach the Lis; where when you come

You find no bridge, and on the further bank
The Flemish power : then spake my lord of Saimpi,
Touching a passage nearer to the springs
By Venay and St. Venant : whereunto
My lord of Raneval made answer meet,
That though the Lis were fordable above,
Yet in the lands of Cassel and Vertus
There dwelt a dangerous people, sulking boors,
Who, when we straggled, as perforce we must,
Through bye-ways sundered by the branching waters,
Should fall upon us, founder'd in the sloughs,
And raise the country round :—thus far, my lords,
Had you proceeded when the tiding came
Of Ypres, Ghent, and Bruges upon the turn,
Repentant of their sins and looking back
For their allegiance ; with the sequel fair
Of much diminished squadrons at Commines.
Then though my lord of Raneval spake well
Of clearance on the Scheldt, through direful need
That now must westward suck the Flemish force,
Yet in abatement came the shrewd account
Of how the Scheldt was grated, gagged, jaw-locked,
With here a turnpike, and with there a turnpike,

And Friesland horses. Said the Knight of Langres,
How shall our victual reach us ? To which adds
Sir Hugh of Saimpi, that the banks are kept.
Wherewithal my Lord of Raneval rejoined
That he, as best became him took no heed,
So it were soon, to whereabouts he faced
The Flemish scum in arms, or on the Scheldt,
Or on the Lis —

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

Permit me, sir, the Lis
I spake not of.

LESTOVET.

I humbly crave your pardon ;
My memory is but crazy, good my lords ;
It oft betrays me vilely. Sir Raoul,
I do beseech you pardon me ; I deemed
(Misled perchance by that so rife renown
Which plants you ever foremost) that your voice
Was mainly raised for speed.

SIR RAOUL OF RANEVAL.

I grant you that ;
No man is more for speed, my lords, than I,
So we outrun not wisdom.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Next—proceed.

LESTOVET.

My lord the admiral was next, and last
The Souldich of Sanxere ; the English fleet
Expected shortly ; winter distant now
But few days' journey ; mallets at your backs,—
These were their fruitful topics : on the last,
An't please your lordships to vouchsafe me audience,
Some tidings have I gathered, here and there,
Which haply not unworthy of your ears
You might, when heard, pronounce.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Say on, Lestovet.

LESTOVET.

At Paris, when the commons and vile people
Beat in the prison doors, ye know, my lords,
That Aubriot their friend, the sometime provost,
Who lay in prison then, made good his flight
To Arc in Burgundy ; from thence, I learn,
He looked abroad, and journeying up and down,
He practised with the towns upon the Marne,

With Rheims and Chalons, Toul and Bar-le-Duc,
With sundry villages in Vermandois,
And Brieche and Laon ; so he moved the poor
(Through help, as I believe, of something evil,
From which God shield good men !) that straight they
slew

The chatelains and farmers of the aids.

They next would raise a power and march to Paris ;
But Nicholas le Flamand bade them wait
Until the Scheldt were 'twixt the king and them,
Which shelter found, he trusted with their aid
To bring the castle of the Louvre low,
And not of Paris only, but of France
And Burgundy, to make the mean-folk lords.
This have I gathered from the last that left
Champagne and Beauvoisin.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Something of this

Reached me last night.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

I had some tidings, too.

SIR JOHN DE VIEN.

And I.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

I think, my lords, this matter asks
A further inquest. If the whole be true,
We were not wise in council to o'erlook it.
Let us take order so to sift the truth
That clearer-sighted we may meet to-morrow ;
Till when I deem it prudent we should hang
In a free judgment.

THE LORD OF ST. JUST.

Till to-morrow, then.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

One day's delay will hurt us not.

SIR LOIS OF SANXERE.

To-morrow.

THE LORD OF SAIMPI.

To-morrow be it, then.

SIR JOHN DE VIEN.

At noon, my lords ?

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

To-morrow noon. Sir Oliver of Clisson,
Wilt please you ride ?

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Your highness does me honour.

THE KING.

Dear uncle, is the council up?

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

It is.

THE KING.

Take that, old Tristram.

THE DUKE OF BOURBON.

Soberly, fair cousin;

You do not well to toss about the parchments.

Ho! tell my serving men we ride to Vis,

The constable and I. Adieu, fair sirs.

(*Exeunt the KING and the LORDS OF THE COUNCIL. Manent TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET, and SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE.*)

LESTOVET.

Go to the duke; tell him the point is carried.

SIR FLEUREANT.

But is it so?

LESTOVFT.

It is as good.

SIR FLEUREANT.

They seek

Some further knowledge.

LESTOVET.

Tut ! they know it all ;
They knew it ere I told them ; but my mind
As touching it, they knew not of till now.
Run to the duke ; pray him to keep his chamber ;
Let him but stand aloof another day,
And come the next, we march upon Commines.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

THE MARKET-PLACE AT YPRES.

In front, VAN WHELK, a Householder, driving the last nails into a scaffolding erected against his house. VAN STOCKENSTROM, another, looking on. A WOMAN is scouring the doorstead of the next house. At some little distance six gallows-trees are seen, opposite the Stadt-house.

VAN WHELK.

Room for five ducats at a groat a head.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

'Twill be a piteous spectacle ! Good day,
How do you, mistress ?

WOMAN.

Thank you, how's yourself ?

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

'Twill be a sight most piteous to behold !
A corporation hung !

WOMAN.

Alack a day !

VAN WHELK.

'Twill be a sight that never yet was seen
Since Ypres was a town. A groat is cheap ;
A groat is very reasonable cheap.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

The burgomaster was confessed at seven ;
He is the first.

VAN WHELK.

Van Rosendael the next,
And then comes Drimmelen, Verstolken then,
And Goswin Hex, and Breero, and De Vry.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

This ancient corporation !

WOMAN.

Wo's the day !

Poor gentlemen ! alas, they did not think,
Nor no man else, the regent would take life
So hastily.

VAN WHELK.

The like was never seen,
Nor ever will be after.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Hold you there ;
Come the French king, and we shall see this square
More thick with gallows than with butchers' stalls
Upon a market day.

WOMAN.

Nay, God forbid !
Master Van Stockenstrom, you will not say so ?

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

It is not saying it that hangs them, dame ;
I tell you it is true.

WOMAN.

There's some have said,
How that king Charles was mighty tender-hearted ;

The dukes his uncles likewise ; and that none
Were lother to shed blood.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Those burghers said it,
Whom yonder gallows wait for ; and if lies
Were worthy hanging, they deserved their doom.

WOMAN.

Well, sirs, I know not.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Tut ! King Charles, I say,
The dukes his uncles, and his councillors all,
Are of one flesh, and follow after kind.
There are humane amongst them ! how humane ?
Humane to lords and ladies, kings and counts.
Humane to such as we ? Believe it not.

VAN WHELK.

The Earl of Flanders is the French king's cousin.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

His majesty, to show his cousin kindness,
Would canter over acres of our bodies.
His cousin is in what he calls distress ;
To succour the distressed is kind and good ;

So with an army comes the good king Charles,
And kindly to his cousin cuts our throats.
And that is their humanity, and such
Is man's humanity the wide world through !
Men's hearts you'll find on one side soft as wax,
Hard as the nether mill-stone on the other.

VAN WHELK.

How is it with your own, Dame Voorst ?

WOMAN.

God save us !

I would not hurt a hair upon the head
Of any man alive.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Look you, the earl—
But hearken to a tale : Once in my youth—
Ah, Mistress Voorst ! years, years, they steal upon us !
But what ! you're comely yet,—well, in my youth,
Occasion was that I should wend my way
From Reninghelst to Ronques, to gather there
Some monies that were owing me ; the road
Went wavering like jagged lightning through the moors,—
For mind, Van Whelk, in those days Rening Fell
Was not so sluiced as now ; the night was near

And wore an ugly likeness to a storm,
When I, misdoubting of my way and weary,
Descried the flickering of a cottage fire
Thorough the casements ; thither sped my feet :
The door was opened by a buxom dame
That smiled and bade me welcome, and great cheer
She made me, with a jocund, stirring mien
Of kindly entertainment, whilst with logs
Crackled the fire, and seemed the very pot
To bubble in a hospitable hurry
That I might sup betimes. Now say, Dame Voorst,
Was not the mistress of this cottage lone
A kind good soul ?

WOMAN.

Yea, truly was she, sir.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Master Van Whelk, what think you ?

VAN WHELK.

Let me see ;

Did she take nothing from you ?

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Not a stiver.

VAN WHELK.

Why, that was charitable ; that was kind ;
That was a woman of the good old times.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Now mark, Van Whelk ; now listen, Mistress Voorst.
The seething-pan upon the fire contained
Six craw-fish for my supper : as I stood
Upon the ruddy hearth, my unlaced thoughts
Fallen to a mood of idle cogitation,
My eyes chanced fix upon the bubbling pot :
Unconsciously awhile I gazed, as one
Seeing that sees not ; but ere long appeared
A tumbling and a labouring in the pot
More than of boiling water ; whereupon,
Looking with eyes inquisitive, I saw
The craw-fish rolling one upon another,
Bouncing, and tossing all their legs abroad
That writhed and twisted, as mixed each with each
They whirled about the pan. God's love ! quoth I,
These craw-fish are alive ! Yea, sir, she answered,
They are not good but when they're sodden quick.
I said no more, but turned me from the hearth,
Feeling a sickness here ; and inwardly

I cried heigh-ho ! that for one man's one supper
 Six of God's creatures should be boiled alive !

WOMAN.

Lord help us, sir ! you wail about the fish
 As they were Christians.

VAN STOCKENSTROM.

Look you, mistress Voorst ;
 The king will be as kind to Louis Mâle
 As this good wife to me : of us mean folk
 He will take count as of so many craw-fish ;
 To please his cousin 'twere to him no sin
 To boil us in a pot.—Back, back, Van Whelk !
 Here be the captains !

[They retire.

*Enter VAUCLAIRE, ROOSDYK, and VAN DEN BOSCH'S
 LIEUTENANT.*

VAUCLAIRE.

Shrewd news ! whence cam'st thou last ?

LIEUTENANT.

From St. Eloy.

ROOSDYK.

On Monday was it that the French passed over ?

LIEUTENANT.

All Monday night 'twould seem that they were crossing
By nines and tens ; the craft would hold no more.

ROOSDYK.

Were there none watching of those jobbernowls
That follow Van den Bosch ?

LIEUTENANT.

The night was dark ;

The most part of our men were sent to sleep
In quarters at Commines, that they might rise
Fresh on the morrow, when the French, 'twas thought,
Would try the passage by the bridge. The rest
Kept guard upon the causeway. Two miles down
The river cranks round an alder grove ;
'Twas there they brought the boats ; strong stakes were
driven

In either bank, and ropes were passed betwixt
Stretching athwart the stream ; by aid of these
Hand over hand they tugged themselves across,
And hid within the thicket ; when day dawned
They still were crossing, but the constable,
Who alway kept his ground, made show to force
The passage of the bridge, and brought us there

To handy-strokes, which so misled our eyes
That nothing else was seen.

ROOSDYK.

Ha, ha ! I love you !
Set you to watch the cat !

LIEUTENANT.

When first we knew,
Their stratagem, six banners could we count,
And thirty pennons on the hither bank,
The lord of Saimpi leading them : were there
Sir Herbeaux of Bellperche, sir John of Roy,
The lords of Chaudronne, Malestroit, Sanxere,
All Bretons, with sir Oliver of Guesclin,
The lords of Laval, Rohan, Beliers, Meaulx,
Sir Tristram de la Jaille, and to be short,
The flower of all their host, from Poictou, Troyes,
Artois and Hainault, Burgundy and France,
That had their station marshalled in the van.

VAUCLAIRE.

And there they stood ?

LIEUTENANT.

As yet they had not fought,
When I was ordered thence ; for Van den Bosch

Upon the eminence beside the bridge
Awaited them, as on a vantage ground,
Whilst they abode below to gather force
From them continually that crossed the stream.

VAUCLAIRE.

Then went you to the good towns near.

LIEUTENANT.

To Bergues,
To Poperinguen, Rolers, Warneston,
To Mesiers and Vertain, with strict command
From Van den Bosch to muster all their men
And send him succour ; thence I hastened here
To pray you do the like.

ROOSDYK.

Oh rare ! I love you !

Didst ever see one beggar dropping alms
Into another's hat ?

LIEUTENANT.

My master sware,
If he should lose the day the cause should lie
In that misfortunate wasting of his strength
By sending aid to Ypres.

VAUCLAIRE.

Send it back,
And we shall lose the town, and he the battle,
Ere it shall reach him : from the nearer towns
He may be timeously recomforted.
Meanwhile lest ill betide him, which, when here
It should be known, would bring a wild destruction
On us and ours, behoves us send forthright
Unto the regent, to advise his highness
Of what hath come to pass. Christoffel Waal,
Mount thee thy horse and hie to Oudenarde,
And bid the regent know the Lis is passed.
That said is all said : he shall know by that
We shall have much ado with this good town,
Ere many days are gone, or many hours.
If he can help us, so.

ROOSDYK.

Aye, mount thy nag,
And make his heels strike fire; away, begone !

VAUCLAIRE.

Know'st thou thy message ?

WAAL.

Sirs, from point to point. [*Exit.*

(*A bell tolls. Muffled drums are heard, and the Head of a Procession appears, entering the Market-place. The Procession is formed chiefly by Friars and Guards ; and lastly appear the BURGOMASTER and the ALDERMEN of several Guilds as Malefactors, with their arms pinioned. They form a line between the Gallows and the Stadt-House. The Market-place suddenly fills with the Populace.*).

VAUCLAIRE.

'This folk looks strangely ! guess you what's toward ?
Is the news known ?

ROOSDYK.

I see no women here ;

There is a mischievous intent.

VAUCLAIRE.

Go you

And get our men of battle under arms ;
We shall have fighting ; this must mean a rescue.

ROOSDYK.

Let the clerks hold the culprits in confession

Some fifteen minutes, and I'll bring you here
The most I can, and till I come again
Let no thief swing, for that should be their sign
Doubtless for rising. I'll be here anon.

[*Exit.*]

Enter a PRICKER.

VAUCLAIRE.

Thy spurs are bloody—what, from Commines, ha !
A battle lost ?

PRICKER.

'Tis so, sir. Van den Bosch,
With what remains of us is flying hither,
And wills you arm.

VAUCLAIRE.

We shall be armed anon :
And some of us you see.

(*He beckons to the Captain of the Guard,
who has charge of the prisoners.*)

Sir, draw your men

More close upon their charge, and look about you,
For here's foul weather.

(*Cries begin to be heard and stones are thrown, one of which hits the steel cap of VAUCLAIRE.*)

Said I not? look here!
These drops fore-run the storm.

(*A cry is heard at the opposite corner of the Market-place, and VAN DEN BOSCH'S PAGE is seen approaching.*)

Lo,—stand aside;
There is a face I'll swear I've sometime seen
Attending Van den Bosch.

PRICKER.

His Page, sir, surely.

PAGE.

My master, sir, is near—

VAUCLAIRE.

Say'st thou! how near?

PAGE.

Close on the town. He enters now.

VAUCLAIRE.

What force

Comes with him ?

PAGE.

It is hard to say ; they ride
So scattered and so broken, wounded most,
And mile by mile, now one and now another,
They tumble from their horses. He himself
Is sorely piked and gashed, and of his hurts,
One, the leech deems, is mortal.

VAUCLAIRE.

Christ forbid !

PAGE.

They bear him in a litter, and each jog
They give him, when the bearers change their hands,
Makes him to bleed afresh.

PRICKER.

See, there he comes !

(*The tumult, which had been increasing, is in some measure stilled as VAN DEN BOSCH is borne across the Market-place to the front of the Scene.*)

VAN DEN BOSCH (*raising himself in the litter*).

Who's that ? Vauclaire ? We're ruined, sir, we're lost !
How stand ye here ?

VAUCLAIRE.

The worst is what I see.

Yet hath the town an evil inclination,
And we shall feel it suddenly.

VAN DEN BOSCH.

Send forth—

Be still, thou jumping villain, with thy jolts !
Thou grind'st my bones to powder. Oh ! oh ! oh !
I would thou hadst my shoulder.—Send abroad,
And bid the Commons to the market-place.

VAUCLAIRE.

Nay, here they are, as thick as they can stand.

VAN DEN BOSCH.

Are they ? My eyesight fails me. And is this
The market-place ? Oho ! then lift me up
Upon some cart or tumbril or the like,
That I may make a preaching to the people.

VAUCLAIRE.

Leave that to me : betake thee to thy bed ;
Roosdyk is making muster of our force,

And what is instant to be cared for here
We will perform.

VAN DEN BOSCH.

Not whilst I live, Vauclaire.

The leech, I think, has patched me up this body
To last a season. Hoist me—have a care—
Mount me upon this scaffolding : up, up—
Smoothly and altogether—there we go—
Oh ! oh ! that's thou again, uneasy whelp !
Hast the string-halt ? Now set me down ;—so—so.
Let silence be commanded.

(*The soldiery fall back, so as to admit the people to the space immediately in front of the scaffolding. Sundry officers pass to and fro, vociferating ‘Silence,’ which is obtained.*)

Friends, Sirs of Ypres !
Dear friends of Ypres ! we have lost a battle.
This once, by evil hap, the day is theirs :
Which is no fault of mine ; for, sirs, I'll tell you
How this hath chanced.
By the Black Art (which Frenchmen dare to use

For lack of godlier courage)—by this art
They brought a cloudy film upon the eyes
Of half our host—the half that should have watched ;
Which was on Monday night : and thus ere dawn
They crossed the Lis. Then, sirs, what force had I,
Without advantage to affront the flower
Of the French van ? Solely twelve thousand spears !
Yet, like a hedge-pig, tucked I up my power
The softer parts within ; and when Sanxere
Came nuzzling like a dog to find some flesh
Whereon to fix and turn me inside out,
I'll warrant you I pricked his snout a little !
Well, sirs, we might have conquer'd, but that then
The Commons of Commines—bell, book, and candle
Curse them that pass for Flemings and are none !—
They of Commines, that called themselves so stout,
Showed such a fear and faintness of their hearts
As makes me sweat with shame to think upon ;
And, traitors in their flight, they fired the town,
To stay the following French. From that time forth,
Seeing we had no holding-place behind,
The best began to falter ; and, in brief,
Ye see us here.—Fellow, some wine ; I tire ;
I've lost some blood.

VAUCLAIRE.

Prithee go in-a-doors,

And let thy hurts be tended.

VAN DEN BOSCH.

(*A cup of wine is brought, which he drinks off.*)

Fair and softly !

There's more to say.

(*An arrow, shot from the crowd, strikes the scaffolding close to VAN DEN BOSCH, whereupon loud cries are heard from both parties, and some blows pass between them, followed by great uproar and confusion.*)

Who hinders my discourse

With shooting cross-bow shafts ? Oh, there you are !

See you yon villain there that gapes and shouts ?

Send me an arrow down his throat.—I say,

This battle lost is nothing lost at all.

For thus the French are wiled across the Lis,

Which ne'er shall they repass. Inveigled on

By wheedling fortune, they shall thus be snared :

For hither comes the regent from the Scheldt,

And hither come the English, that are now
Landed at Dunkirk—landed now, I tell you ;
The news was brought me yesterday ; which heard,
Verily I was glad I lost this battle,
Although it cost me something—(for ye see
How I am troubled in my head and shoulder)—
Yea truly I rejoiced that thus the French
Should run upon a pit-fall, whilst we sweep
A circle round them, so that none——more wine——

(*Sinks suddenly back in the litter.*)

Here is a bandage loose—staunch me this blood—
Look ye, I bleed to death—oh, doctor vile !
Oh treacherous chirurgeon !—endless fire
Crumble his bones in hell !—I die, I die !

VAUCLAIRE (*helping to re-adjust the bandage*).

Another plie ; now draw it tight ; anon
Roosdyk will come and give us escort hence ;
Meanwhile defend yourselves and shoot again
If you be shot at.

VAN DEN BOSCH.

Now the trumpets sound !

Chains for the king ! The trumpets sound again !
Chains for the knights and nobles ! Victory !

Thou gaoler, shut the doors. 'Tis very dark !
Whose hand is this ?—Van Artevelde's?—I thank you :
'Twas Fortune favoured me. Chains, chains and death !
Chains for the king of France !—You've shut me in.
It is all over with me now, good mother.
Let the bells toll.

VAUCLAIRE.

Bring him behind these boards ;
The arrows now come quickly. Send a flight——
They've loosed the prisoners. See, they bear this way ;
Shoot well together once and then fall back,
And force a road to Ghent with Van den Bosch
Alive or dead. I follow if I can.
Well shot !—they're fluttered : steadily, my friends ;
Take forth the litter first ; now close your ranks ;
Show a back front ; so—off ye go—well done !

[*Exeunt, and the scene closes amidst loud cries
of the pursuing party.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

VAN ARTEVELDE'S TENT, IN THE FLEMISH CAMP
BEFORE OUDEMARSH.

ELENA and CECILE.

ELENA (*singing*).

Quoth tongue of neither maid nor wife
To heart of neither wife nor maid,
Lead we not here a jolly life
Betwixt the shine and shade.

Quoth heart of neither maid nor wife
To tongue of neither wife nor maid,
Thou wag'st, but I am worn with strife,
And feel like flowers that fade.

'There was truth in that, Cecile.

CECILE.

Fie on such truth !

Rather than that my heart spoke truth in dumps,
I'd have it what it is, a merry liar.

ELENA.

Yes, you are right ; I would that I were merry !
Not for my own particular, God knows !
But for his ease : he needs to be enlivened ;
And for myself in him ; because I know
That often he must think me dull and dry,
I am so heavy-hearted, and at times
Outright incapable of speech. Oh me !
I was not made to please.

CECILE.

Yourself, my lady ;
'Tis true to please yourself you were not made,
Being truly by yourself most hard to please ;
But speak for none beside ; for you were made
Almighty all others to enchant,
Wherein you never fail.

ELENA.

Yes, but I do ;
How can I please him when I cannot speak ?
When he is absent I am full of thought,
And fruitful in expression inwardly,

And fresh and free and cordial is the flow
Of my ideal and unheard discourse,
Calling him in my heart endearing names,
Familiarly fearless. But alas !

No sooner is he present than my thoughts
Are breathless and bewitched, and stunted so
In force and freedom, that I ask myself
Whether I think at all, or feel, or live,
So senseless am I !

CECILE.

Heed not that, my lady ;
Men heed it not ; I never heard of one
That quarrelled with his lady for not talking.
I have had lovers more than I can count ;
And some so quarrelsome, a slap in the face
Would make them hang themselves if you'd believe
them ;
But for my insufficiencies of speech
They ne'er reproached me : no, the testiest of them
Ne'er fish'd a quarrel out of that.

ELENA.

Thy swains
Might bear their provocations in that kind,

Yet not of silence prove themselves enamoured.
But mark you this, Cecile : your grave and wise
And melancholy men, if they have souls,
As commonly they have, susceptible
Of all impressions, lavish most their love
Upon the blithe and sportive, and on such
As yield their want, and chase their sad excess
With jocund salutations, nimble talk,
And buoyant bearing. Would that I were merry !
Mirth have I valued not before ; but now
What would I give to be the laughing fount
Of gay imaginations ever bright,
And sparkling fantasies ! Oh, all I have,
Which is not nothing, though I prize it not,
My understanding soul, my brooding sense,
My passionate fancy, and the gift of gifts
Dearest to woman, which deflowering Time,
Slow ravisher, from clenched'st fingers wrings—
My corporal beauty, would I barter now
For such an antick and exulting spirit
As lives in lively women. Who comes hither ?

CECILE.

"Tis the old friar ; he they sent to England ;

That ancient man so yellow ! By our Lady !
He's yellower than he went. Note but his look ;
His rind's the colour of a mouldy walnut.
Troth ! his complexion is no wholesomer
Than a sick frog's.

ELENA.

Be silent ; he will hear you.

CECILE.

It makes me ill to look at him.

ELENA.

Hush ! hush !

CECILE.

It makes me very ill.

Enter FATHER JOHN OF HEDA.

FATHER JOHN.

Your pardon, lady,

I seek the regent.

ELENA.

Please you, sit awhile ;

He comes anon.

FATHER JOHN.

This tent is his?

ELENA.

It is.

FATHER JOHN.

And likewise yours.—(*Aside.*) Yea, this is as I heard;
A wily woman hither sent from France.
Alas! alas! how frail the state of man!
How weak the strongest! This is such a fall
As Sampson suffered.

CECILE (*aside to ELENA.*).

How the friar croaks!

What is he gibbering?

ELENA.

May we not deem

Your swift return auspicious? Sure it denotes
A prosperous mission?

FATHER JOHN.

What I see and hear
Of sinful courses, and of nets and snares
Encompassing the feet of them that once
Were steadfast deemed, speaks only to my heart
Of coming judgments.

CECILE.

What I see and hear
Of naughty friars and of—

ELENA.

Peace, Cecile !
Go to your chamber ; you forget yourself.

[*Exit CECILE.*

Father, your words afflict me.

Enter VAN ARTEVELDE.

ARTEVELDE (*as he enters*).

Who is it says
That Father John is come ? Ah ! here he is.
Give me your hand, good Father ! For your news,
Philosophy befriend me that I show
No strange impatience ; for your every word
Must touch me in the quick.

FATHER JOHN.

To you alone
Would I address myself.

ARTEVELDE.

Nay, heed not her ;
She is my privy councillor.

FATHER JOHN.

My lord,

Such councillors I abjure. My function speaks,
And through me speaks the Master whom I serve :
After strange women them that went astray
God never prospered in the olden time,
Nor will he bless them now. An angry eye
That sleeps not, follows thee till from thy camp
Thou shalt have put away the evil thing.
This in her presence will I say—

ELENA.

Oh God !

FATHER JOHN.

That whilst a foreign leman—

ARTEVELDE.

Spare her, Father.

To me say what thou wilt.

FATHER JOHN.

Thus then it is :

This foreign tie is not to Heaven alone
Displeasing, but to those on whose firm faith
Rests under Heaven your all ;—
It is offensive to your army—nay

And justly, for they deem themselves betrayed,
When circumvented thus by foreign wiles
They see their chief.

ELENA.

Oh ! let me quit the camp.
Misfortune follows wheresoe'er I come !
My destiny on whomsoe'er I love
Alights ! It shall not, Artevelde, on thee ;
For I will leave thee to thy better fortune,
And pray for thee aloof.

FATHER JOHN.

Thou shalt do well
For him and for thyself ; the camp is now
A post of danger.

ELENA.

Artevelde ! Oh God !
And must I quit thee then in danger's hour !

FATHER JOHN.

As thou wouldst make his danger more or less,
So now demean thyself—stay or depart.
I say again the universal camp,
Nay more—the towns of Flanders are agape
With tales of sorceries, witcheries, and spells,

That blind their chief, and yield him up a prey
To treasons foul. How much is true or false
I know not, and I say not ; but this truth
I sorrowfully declare,—that ill repute
And sin and shame grow up with every hour
That sees you linked together in these bonds
Of spurious love.

ELENA.

Father, enough is said.

Clerk's eyes nor soldier's will I more molest
By tarrying here. Seek other food to feed
Your pious scorn and pertinent suspicions.
I am a sinful and unhappy creature ;
Yet may be injured ; there is room to wrong me,
As you will find hereafter. I will go,
Lest this injustice done to me work harm
Unto my lord the Regent.

ARTEVELDE.

Hold, Elena ;

Give me a voice in this. You, Father John,
I blame not, nor myself will justify ;
But call my weakness what you will, the time
Is past for reparation. Now to cast off

The partner of my sin were further sin ;
'Twere with her first to sin, and next against her.
And for the army, if their trust in me
Be sliding, let it go ; I know my course.
And be it armies, cities, people, priests,
That quarrel with my love, wise men or fools,
Friends, foes, or factions, they may swear their oaths,
And make their murmur—rave, and fret, and fear,
Suspect, admonish—they but waste their rage,
Their wits, their words, their counsel : Here I stand :
Upon the deep foundations of my faith,
To this fair outcast plighted ; and the storm
That princes from their palaces shakes out,
Though it should turn and head me, should not strain
The seeming silken texture of this tie.— .
To business next.—Come hither, my Elena ;
I will not have thee go as one suspect ;
Stay and hear all. Father, forgive my heat,
And do not deem me stubborn. Now at once
The English news ?

FATHER JOHN.

Your deeds upon your head !
Be silent, my surprise—be told, my tale.

No open answer from the English king
Could we procure, no honest yea or nay,
But only grave denotements of good-will,
With mention of the perils of the seas,
The much tempestuous season, and the loss
Unspeakable that England suffered late
In her sea-strengths ; but not the less, they said,
By reason of good love and amity,
The king should order reckonings to be made,
By two sufficient scholars, of the charge
Of what we sought ; his parliament then sitting
He would take counsel of, and send you word
What might be done.

ARTEVELDE.

A leisurely resolve.

The king took counsel of his own desires,
Ere of his lords and commons. Had he wished
To do this thing, he had not asked advice.
In the pure polity of a monarch's mind
The will is privy-councillor to the judgment.
When shall his answer reach us ?

FATHER JOHN.

In my wake

Sir Richard Farrington, I found, had followed ;
And, sped by favourabler winds than mine,
Reached Dunkirk with me. Letters sealed he brought ;
But hearing how forth the French had fared,
He halted, and would neither bring nor send
His letters, nor their purport would disclose.

ARTEVELDE.

Have you no guess of their contents ?

FATHER JOHN.

A shrewd one.

They promised, doubtless, largely ; but were meant
To be delivered should you thrive—not else.
The English nobles, though they'd use your arms,
If victory crowned them, to encumber France,
Much in their secret minds mislike your cause.
Jack Straw, Wat Tyler, Lister, Walker, Ball,
That against servage raised the late revolt,
Were deemed the spawn of your success : last year
Has taught the nobles that their foes at home
Are worthier notice than the French. In truth,
They should not be displeased at any ill
That might befall you.

ARTEVELDE.

Father, so I think.

Lo ! with the chivalry of Christendom
I wage my war—no nation for my friend,
Yet in each nation having hosts of friends !
The bondsmen of the world, that to their lords
Are bound with chains of iron, unto me
Are knit by their affections. Be it so.
From kings and nobles will I seek no more
Aid, friendship, nor alliance. With the poor
I make my treaty, and the heart of man
Sets the broad seal of its allegiance there,
And ratifies the compact. Vassals, serfs,
Ye that are bent with unrequited toil,
Ye that have whitened in the dungeon's darkness
Through years that knew not change of night and day—
Tatterdemalions, lodgers in the hedge,
Lean beggars with raw backs and rumbling maws,
Whose poverty was whipped for starving you,—
I hail you my auxiliars and allies,
The only potentates whose help I crave !
Richard of England, thou hast slain Jack Straw ;

But thou hast left unquenched the vital spark
That set Jack Straw on fire. The spirit lives ;
And, as when he of Canterbury fell,
His seat was filled by some no better clerk,
So shall John Ball that slew him be replaced ;
And if I live and thrive, these English lords
Double requital shall be served withal
For this their double-dealing.—Pardon me ;
You are but just dismounted, and the soil
Of travel is upon you ; food and rest
You must require. Attendance there ! what ho !

Enter Two Serving Men.

These will supply your wants. To-morrow morn
We will speak more together. Father John,
Though peradventure fallen in your esteem,
I humbly ask your blessing, as a man,
That having passed for more in your repute
Than he could justify, should be content,
Not with his state, but with the judgment true
That to the lowly level of his state
Brings down his reputation.

FATHER JOHN.

Oh, my son !

High as you stand, I will not strain mine eyes
To see how higher still you stood before.
God's blessing be upon you ! Fare you well.

[*Exit.*]

ARTEVELDE.

The old man weeps. Let England play me false.
The greater is my glory if the day
Is won without her aid. I stand alone ;
And standing so against the mingled might
Of Burgundy and France, to hold mine own
Is special commendation ; to prevail
So far as victory were high renown ;
To be foredone no singular disgrace.

ELENA.

Look ! a horse-stranger comes.

Enter an ATTENDANT, followed by a Man-at-arms.

ATTENDANT.

May't please your highness,
A scout from Van den Bosch.

ARTEVELDE.

And with ill news

Thy face would say. What is it?

SCOUT.

Please your highness,

My master bids you know that yesterday
Some cunning Frenchmen stole across the Lis
In boats and rafts, a league below Commines,
And now they press him hard upon his rear ;
Wherefore he warns you that you look to Ypres,
Which he can do no longer.

ARTEVELDE.

The Lis past !

Mischief, be welcome, if thou com'st alone !
Is that the worst ?

SCOUT.

'Tis all, my lord, I know.

ELENA.

Is it so very bad ?

ARTEVELDE.

No, no, 'tis not.

Let him have food and wine ; he has ridden hard,
And lacks refreshment. Go, repair thy looks,

And make me no such signals in my camp
Of losses and mishap. Speak cheerily
To whomsoe'er thou seest.

[*Exeunt ATTENDANT and SCOUT.*]

No, 'tis untoward,
Luckless, unfortunate ; but that is all.
If Ypres bear as stoutly up against it
As I can do, we're not so much the worse.

Enter VAN RYK, followed by a MESSENGER.

VAN RYK.

A messenger, my lord, arrived from Ypres.

ARTEVELDE.

Here is another ugly face of news !
What now ?

MESSENGER.

My lord, sure tidings came last night
That Van den Bosch was worsted on the Lis,
And with a broken force was falling back
On Ypres for protection.

ARTEVELDE.

Is that all ?

MESSENGER.

It is, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

It is enough. What news
Had ye of Menin, Werwick, and Messines ?

MESSENGER.

The bells were rung in each, and they were bid
To send all aid that they could muster straight
To Van den Bosch ; but little went, or none.

ARTEVELDE.

And doubtless now the Frenchman has them all ?

MESSENGER.

I know not that, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

But I do. Go ;

Thou art a wofuller fellow than the last,
Yet cheerfuller than what is like to follow.
Get thee to dinner, and be spare of speech.

MESSENGER.

My master bade me to entreat your highness
To send him instant succour.

ARTEVELDE.

What, to Ypres ?

He's mad to think it ! How should aid get there,
 With all the Upper Lis, as past a doubt
 It must be now, from Warneston to Courtray,
 O'errun with French ? I will not send a man.
 It were but to lose more.

MESSENGER.

My master, sir,
 Was fearful of the burghers.

ARTEVELDE.

So he might,
 And I am troubled at his jeopardy ;
 Far liefer would I part with this right hand,
 Than with Vauclaire, his service, and his love.
 I think the Burghers will hold off awhile
 To see the issue of my personal arms.
 If not, I cannot help him. If they do,
 That which is best for all is best for him.
 Go ; keep thy counsel ; talk not in the camp.

[*Exit MESSENGER.*

VAN RYK.

My lord, the rumour in the camp goes further
 Than where his story stops.

ARTEVELDE.

Aye, does it ; how ?

VAN RYK.

Ypres revolted ; Van den Bosch, Vauclaire,
And Roosdyk slain or taken. So it runs.

ELENA.

Oh, this is worse and worse !

ARTEVELDE.

Go in, Elena.

These are not matters for a feminine council.

ELENA.

Oh, let me stay with you.

ARTEVELDE.

Go in, my love.—

[*Exit* ELENA.

Worst rumours now will still be likest truth ;
And yet, if Ypres truly had revolted,
Undoubted tidings of so great a matter
Had surely reached us.

VAN RYK.

If you mark, my lord,

Mostly a rumour of such things precedes
The certain tiding.

ARTEVELDE.

It is strange, yet true,
That doubtful knowledge travels with a speed
Miraculous, which certain cannot match.
I know not why, when this or that has chanced,
The smoke should come before the flash ; yet 'tis so.
Why who comes here ? Vauclaire himself !

*Enter VAUCLAIRE, in disordered apparel, and covered
with the soil of travel.*

Vauclaire,

Thy coming speaks ; it tells of Ypres lost ;
Perhaps of worse ; and thou art welcome still !
Can friendship speak thee fairer ?

VAUCLAIRE.

Thanks, my Lord.
You have lost Ypres, 'tis no worse nor better.

ARTEVELDE.

I can spare Ypres so I keep Vauclaire.
Let the town go. How came you off alive ?

VAUCLAIRE.

The rascal burghers tied me hand and foot,
And like a thief upon a hurdle trailed me

Toward King Charles's camp upon the mount ;
Half way to which some twenty of my guard,
With Roosdyk at their head, broke in upon them,
Crying a rescue, and ere aid could come
We were safe mounted upon chosen nags
That distanced all pursuit.

ARTEVELDE.

Why that is well.

Where's Roosdyk ?

VAUCLAIRE.

Eating, I'll be sworn, and drinking.

ARTEVELDE.

And Van den Bosch ?

VAUCLAIRE.

That is a sadder story ;

I fear he lives no longer.

ARTEVELDE.

Aye, Vauclaire !

VAUCLAIRE.

Much wounded from Commines he came to Ypres,
Whence we despatched him, less alive than dead,
Upon the road to Ghent. I hardly think
That he can live the journey through.

ARTEVELDE.

Farewell !

Brave Van den Bosch ! and God assoile thy soul !
Vauclaire, we must be stirring ; to the dead
An after time will give the need of mourning ;
Our present days are due to them that live.
Let us to council with my officers,
And sit by me ; for in my host henceforth
Thou shalt be next me in authority.

VAUCLAIRE.

Deep are my debts to your good-will, my lord ;
More than my life can pay.

ARTEVELDE.

Nay, say no more ;
You owe me nothing ; what I have to give
Is held in trust and parted with for service.
Value received is writ on my commissions,
Nor would I thank the man that should thank me
For aught as given him gratis. Let's to council ;
I'll lie no longer here at Oudenarde
To hear of towns betraying me. Our camp
We must break up to morrow and push on
Boldly to Courtray and the Lower Lis.

The towns to the North and West will falter else
And Frenchify their faith. It is God's mercy
That some seven thousand citizens of Bruges
Are in my host, whose heads will pledges be
For what might fail me there. From Damme and Sluys,
From Dendermonde, the Quatre-Metiers, Ghent,
From Ardenburgh and Grammont and Alost,
We'll bring the rear-guard up. The Lis, the Lis !
Let me but reach the Lis before King Charles !

VAUCLAIRE.

The Upper Lis were easily regained
Could we but keep the Lower.

ARTEVELDE.

Now to council.

Enter VAN RYK.

VAN RYK.

A countryman, my lord, arrived from Heule
Says that King Charles is on his march to Rosebecque.

ARTEVELDE.

To Rosebecque let him come ! With God's good-speed
I shall be there before him. Sirs, to council.

[*Ereunt.*

SCENE II.

THE FRENCH CAMP AT WINKEL ST. ELOY.

*Enter from opposite sides the DUKE OF BURGUNDY
and TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.*

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Another town come in, I hear ; that's ten.
Now they will own I knew my way to Flanders.
Ypres, and Dunkirk, Cassel, Thorout, Bergues,
Makes five walled towns, and Poperinguen six ;
And then there's Werwick, Vailant, and Messines,
And now comes Rousselaere, which rounds the tale.
Anon, they'll say that I had reason, ha ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

They will, my lord. Success will couch the blind.
The wise by speculation know to trade,
And give their wits long credit and they thrive ;
A scrambling wit must live from hand to mouth
On issues and events. Prosperity
Is warranty of wisdom with the world ;

Failure is foolishness. Now all will prize
Your grace's judgment at its worth.

(*A cry within ‘Place ho !’*)

*Enter the KING, with SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON, the
LORDS OF SAIMPI AND SANXERE, and others, and
lastly, somewhat apart from the rest, SIR FLEURE-
ANT OF HEURLEE.*

THE KING.

Well uncle, here we are ! Get supper ready.
How fast you rode ! I galloped half a mile—
But then St. Poule, he blew—oh he's too fat !
Is not the bastard of St. Poule too fat ?

THE LORD OF SAIMPI.

May't please your majesty he's grossly fat.

THE KING.

I galloped——uncle, what is this ? Lo me !
A span-new sword—by God, of Spanish steel,
And longer than mine own—uncle, by God,
A king's sword should be longer than a duke's ;
I must have this ; this is a royal sword.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Cousin, you are not tall enough to wear it.

THE KING.

Not tall enough indeed ! Is supper ready ?
When shall we get to Rosebecque ? Here's St. Poule.

Enter ST. POULE.

So, here you come, you broken-winded bastard,
You're always left behind. How far to Rosebecque ?
Tell me, my lords, shall we be there to-morrow ?

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Your majesty, with weather to your wish,
Might lodge at Rosebecque with your vanguard force
To-morrow night.

THE KING.

And when shall come the rear ?

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

On Wednesday morning.

THE KING.

And on Thursday night
The bastard of St. Poule. Hurrah for Rosebecque !
Remember, uncle, when the armies meet,
I am to make the knights ; four hundred of them,
The constable himself will tell you so.

Four hundred fire-new knights there should be made
Before the battle joins, and I'm to make them ;
My lord of Clisson am I not ? Thwack, thwack,
Thwack, thwack, thwack, thwack, will go my sword,
 thwack, thwack.

You Tristram of Lestovet, kneel you down
And I will—thwack—I'll try my hand—thwack, thwack.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Come, cousin, come, you're wanton. Go within
And eat your supper.

THE KING.

What, is supper ready ?

Lights, lights here, ho ! Come, bastard, come along.

The first of a feast and the last of a fray
Has been a wise word for this many a day !

[*Exit, followed by all but the DUKE OF
BURGUNDY and LESTOVET.*

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

It looks like rain, Lestovet ; were it much
Our van could hardly, in but one day's march,
Arrive at Rosebecque ; or if pressed so far,

'Twould tell against their strength upon the morrow,
And stop them there.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

My lord, that there they'll stop
I doubt not ; for I'm inmost assured
That we shall find upon the Lower Lis
The total Flemish host : the Lower Lis
They to the utterance will dispute ; for there
Their chief, who lacks not capability,
Will justly deem their all to be impledged.
'Twere not amiss to slack the vanguard's pace
And quicken up the rear, that like a worm
The army's tail should gather to its head
Before it move again.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

It may be well.
Your thought is mine touching the Flemish host ;
It will be found at Rosebecque, and, God willing,
It shall be left to feed the vultures there.
Where'er 'tis met, that such will be its fate
I am as sure as that this glove is steel,
And I am Duke of Burgundy.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

My lord,

That this vile Flemish scum, with coats of mail
Not worth three folds of cloth, should hold at bay
The spear-heads of Bourdeaux, were doubtless strange ;
And yet such things have happened. In their chief
Resides the spell which makes this herd so mad
To brave the chivalry of France in arms.
Their chief is either leagued with hell himself,
Or hath some potent necromancer's aid ;
If he be not the devil's feudatory,
He holds in soccage of a fiend that is.
You'll see a hundred thousand spell-bound hearts
By art of witchcraft so affatuate,
That for his love they'd dress themselves in dowlas
And fight with men of steel.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

At Bruges, 'tis true,
They dared but little less.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Methinks, my lord,
The Knight of Heurlée is of late much altered.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

It may be so ; what, since he joined us last ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

He hath a dirty, wild, neglected favour ;
 Is careless of his garb, gets drunk alone,
 Lies late a-bed, as skulking from the day,
 Curses his serving-men, avoids his friends,
 Is quarrelsome and very meagre-witted
 To what he was, save only in his gibes,
 And them less savoury seasoned ; what was once
 An ounce of venom to a pound of mirth
 Apportioned t'other way. In truth, he's changed ;
 A moody, heavy, sad-conditioned man,
 That had from nature a most mounting heart,
 And revelled formerly in joys to him
 As native and as unsolicited
 As to the lark her song.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Whence comes this change ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

In truth, my lord, I know not.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Hear you nothing ?

Is nothing said, surmised ? what think you, ha ?
 Some secret discontent ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Not that, my lord.

More likely that he finds his knightly name
Something bedimmed, and held in less esteem,
By reason of his flight from Oudenarde :
For, though he will not own it, 'tis believed
He was at large upon his honour's pawn
To keep within the Flemish camp, and fled
Leaving the pledge behind him.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Nothing more ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

That is one wound ; but there is yet another.
Whether by word, or blow, or both, 'twas dealt,
I know not, for he's reticent and shy
To a close question ; but this much I know,
That in the sleeping-chamber of a maid
(So called for courtesy) he was caught at night,
Concealed for no good purpose, whereupon
The regent (so by courtesy again—
As much a regent he as she a maid)
Who entertained the damsel for himself,
Moved by his anger, offered to the knight,

In act or threat, some dire indignity,
That ever since hath poisoned all the springs
At which his spirit drank, and is the cause,
If my conjecture err not, that he stands
The withered, blackened, and disfigured stump
We see him now.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

If that be all, his grief
Toucheth not us.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

The contrary, my lord ;
It touches more the enemy. Your grace
Has possibly had read to you the tale,
Long chronicled, of an earl of Conversana,
Who in the day of battle met his death,
Not from his opposites in the field, though brave,
But from the hand of one who rode beside him.
An ancient grudge had treasured been till then
When death were doubly bitter, bringing down
Defeat and overthrow and loss of lands
And ruin to his friends. 'Twere strange, my lord,
If such a fate befel Van Artevelde.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Yes, it were very strange.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Your grace was right !

We shall have rain ; the sky looks wondrous heavy.
I know not if your grace gave heed to it,
But yesterday at noon, or thereabouts,
I heard some grumblings up amongst the clouds
That much resembled thunder : Pish ! quoth I,
The year is too far wearing from its prime
To speak in thunder now.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Who was that earl ?

The earl of Conversana ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

He, my lord.

But yet again I heard it, and more plain ;
And then, quoth I, if this be aught but thunder,
The god of thunder keeps a mocking-bird,
And it is that we hear.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Upon what ground

Deemed you the earl of Conversana's fate
Should figure forth Van Artevelde's ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

My lord ?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

What mean you by this history of that earl ?

How doth it typify Van Artevelde's ?

How lights the one the other ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Nay, my lord,

'Twas but a stumbling comment of my thought.

When we have strained our foresight past its power

Fantastic flashes oft will come across it,

And whence we nothing know.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Come, come, Lestovet,

Let us be open and direct. Thy drift ?

What did thy thought contain, that being stirred

Sent to the top this story of a murder ?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

The honest truth to tell, my lord, a dream,

Whether by good or evil spirit drawn

Upon the vacant canvass of my sleep,

Your grace shall be the judge,—a dream it was

Showed me Van Artevelde upon his horse—

Though whether mounted to survey the ground,
Or to array his host, or lead the charge,
I saw not,—but there sitting as he gazed
Upon an undistinguishable blank,
Of anything or nothing—what I know not—
Struck from behind he fell—and with his fall
Vanished his host.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

This was a waking dream.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

I mused upon it waking.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And this dream

Thou think'st will peradventure come to pass?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

If fate so orders it, my lord.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And fate

Will find some human furtherance; is it so?

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Were it a thing well warranted, my lord,
It might be well attended.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Truly fate

Should do the king a singular good service
If this should happen.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Destiny, my lord,
Is oft-times worked upon by mighty names
Of dukes and regal potentates, whose power
May currently avouch her doubtful deeds,
If haply called in question.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Six o'clock
Were not too soon to be afoot to-morrow,
If, as is likely, there be waters out
Upon our lines of march.

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

There's light at six.
Two words, my lord, were warranty enough.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Why, very well then ; six is late enough.
Tell my lord constable before he sleeps
To let the trumpets sound us a reveillée
Some half an hour to six.

[*Exit.*]

TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET.

Well said, my lord.

Your grace's scruples master not your heart,
But serve your reputation. This is conscience ;
A herald marshalling each act its place
By its emblazonry and cognisance.
My lord of Burgundy, your grace is wary,
So, by your leave, is Tristram of Lestovet.
If policy stick fast, be tried revenge ;
And what revenge more sharp, my lord of Bourbon,
Than what is sprung of jealousy. That bites.
My lord, I'll pluck your jealousy by the ear,
And if it wake not, why your grace's bosom
Is not the serpent's nest I take it for.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

THE FLEMISH CAMP ON THE EASTERN BANK OF THE
LIS, BETWEEN DISSEGHEM AND ROSEBECQUE.

Van Artevelde's Pavilion. ARTEVELDE and ELENA.

ELENA.

What is it that disturbs you ?

ARTEVELDE.

Nothing dearest ;

I am not disturbed.

ELENA.

You are not like yourself.

What took you from your bed ere break of day ?

Where have you been ? I know you're vexed with
something.

Tell me, now, what has happened.

ARTEVELDE.

Be at rest.

No accident, save of the world within ;

Occurrences of thought ; 'tis nothing more.

ELENA.

It is of such that love most needs to know.

The loud transactions of the outlying world

Tell to your masculine friends : tell me your thoughts.

ARTEVELDE.

They stumbled in the dusk 'twixt night and day.

I dreamed distressfully, and waking knew

How an old sorrow had stolen upon my sleep,

Molesting midnight and that short repose

Which industry had earned, so to stir up

About my heart remembrances of pain

Least sleeping when I sleep, least sleeping then
When reason and the voluntary powers
That turn and govern thought are laid to rest.
Those powers by this nocturnal inroad wild
Surprised and broken, vainly I essayed
To rally, and unsubjugate the mind
Took its direction from a driftless dream.
Then passed I forth.

ELENA.

You stole away so softly
I knew it not, and wondered when I woke.

ARTEVELDE.

The gibbous moon was in a wan decline,
And all was silent as a sick man's chamber.
Mixing its small beginnings with the dregs
Of the pale moonshine and a few faint stars,
The cold uncomfortable day-light dawned ;
And the white tents, topping a low ground-fog,
Showed like a fleet becalmed. I wandered far,
Till reaching to the bridge I sate me down
Upon the parapet. Much mused I there,
Revolving many a passage of my life,
And the strange destiny that lifted me
To the he leader of a mighty host

And terrible to kings. What followed then
I hardly may relate, for you would smile,
And say I might have dreamed as well a-bed
As gone abroad to dream.

ELENA.

I shall not smile ;
And if I did, you would not grudge my lips
So rare a visitation. But the cause,
Whate'er it be, that casts a shadow here,

(kissing his brow.)

How should it make me smile ? What followed, say,
After your meditations on the bridge ?

ARTEVELDE.

I'll tell it, but I bid you not believe it ;
For I am scarce so credulous myself
As to believe that was, which my eyes saw—
A visual not an actual existence.

ELENA.

What was it like ? Wore it a human likeness ?

ARTEVELDE.

That such existences there are, I know ;
For whether by the corporal organ framed,
Or painted by a brainish fantasy
Upon the inner sense, not once nor twice,

But sundry times, have I beheld such things
Since my tenth year, and most in this last past.

ELENA.

What was it you beheld ?

ARTEVELDE.

To-day ?

ELENA.

Last night—

This morning—when you sate upon the bridge.

ARTEVELDE.

'Twas a fantastic sight.

ELENA.

What sort of sight ?

ARTEVELDE (*after a pause*).

Once in my sad and philosophic youth—
For very philosophic in my dawn
And twilight of intelligence was I—
Once at this cock-crow of philosophy,
Much tired with rest and with the stable earth,
I launched my little bark and put to sea,
Errant for geste and enterprise of wit
Through all this circumnavigable globe.
I cavilled at the elements—what is earth ?

A huge congestion of unmethodised matter
With but a skin of life—a mighty solid
Which Nature, prodigal of space, provides
For superficial uses : and what air ?
A motion and a pressure : fire, a change ;
And light the language of the things called dumb.

ELENA.

I have been told the studies of your youth
Were strangely thought of, but I'm well assured
They never were unlawful.

ARTEVELDE.

You are right.

My meditations in their outset wore
The braveries of ignorance and youth,
But cast them, and were innocent thenceforth ;
For they were followed with a humble heart,
Though an inquisitive ; and humbler still
In spirit waxed they as they further went.
The elements I left to contemplate.
Then I considered life in all its forms,
Of vegetables first, next zoophytes,
The tribe that dwells upon the confine strange
'Twixt plants and fish ; some are there from their mouth

Spit out their progeny, and some that breed
By suckers from their base or tubercles,
Sea-hedgehog, madrepore, sea-ruff, or pad,
Fungus, or sponge, or that gelatinous fish
That taken from its element at once
Stinks, melts, and dies a fluid ;—so from these,
Through many a tribe of less equivocal life,
Dividual or insect, up I ranged,
From sentient to percipient—small advance—
Next to intelligent, to rational next,
So to half-spiritual human-kind,
And what is more, is more than man may know.
Last came the troublesome question—what am I ?
A blade, a seedling of this growth of life
Wherewith the outside of the earth is covered ;
A comprehensive atom, all the world
In act of thought embracing ; in the world
A grain scarce filling a particular place !
Thus travelled I the region up and down
Wherein the soul is circumscribed below ;
And unto what conclusion ?

ELENA.

Nay, your promise !

Tell what you saw ; I must not be denied
After a promise given ; tell me of that.

ARTEVELDE.

I say to what conclusion came I then,
These winding links to fasten ?

ELENA.

I surmise
To none ; such ramblings end where they begin.

ARTEVELDE.

Conclusions inconclusive, that I own ;
Yet, I would say, not vain, not nothing worth.
This circulating principle of life
That vivifies the outside of the earth
And permeates the sea ; that here and there
Awakening up a particle of matter,
Informs it, organises, gives it power
To gather and associate to itself,
Transmute, incorporate other, for a term
Sustains the congruous fabric, and then quits it ;
This vagrant principle so multiform,
Ebullient here and undetected there,
Is not unauthorised, nor increate,
Though indestructible. Life never dies ;
Matter dies off it, and it lives elsewhere,

Or elsehow circumstanced and shaped ; it goes ;
At every instant we may say 'tis gone,
But never it hath ceased ; the type is changed,
Is ever in transition, for life's law
To its eternal essence doth prescribe
Eternal mutability : and thus
To say I live—says, I partake of that
Which never dies : But how far I may hold
An interest indivisible from life
Through change (and whether it be mortal change,
Change of senescence, or of gradual growth,
Or other whatsoever 'tis alike)
Is question not of argument, but fact.
In all men some such interest inheres ;
In most 'tis posthumous ; the more expand
Our thoughts and feelings past the very present,
The more that interest overtakes of change
And comprehends, till what it comprehends
Is comprehended in eternity,
And in no less a span.

ELENA.

Love is eternal.

Whatever dies, that lives, I feel and know.

It is too great a thing to die.

ARTEVELDE.

So be it!

ELENA.

But, Artevelde, you shall not lead me off
Through by-ways from my quest. Touching this sight
Which you have seen ?

ARTEVELDE.

Touching this eye-creation ;
What is it to surprise us ? Here we are
Engendered out of nothing cognisable.
If this be not a wonder, nothing is ;
If this be wonderful, then all is so.
Man's grosser attributes can generate
What is not, and has never been at all ;
What should forbid his fancy to restore
A being passed away ? The wonder lies
In the mind merely of the wondering man.,
Treading the steps of common life with eyes
Of curious inquisition, some will stare
At each discovery of nature's ways,
As it were new to find that God contrives.
The contrary were marvellous to me,

And till I find it I shall marvel not.
Or all is wonderful, or nothing is.
As for this creature of my eyes——

ELENA.

What was it ?

The semblance of a human creature ?

ARTEVELDE.

Yes.

ELENA.

Like any you had known in life ?

ARTEVELDE.

Most like ;

Or more than like, it was the very same.
It was the image of my wife.

ELENA.

Of her !

The Lady Adriana ?

ARTEVELDE.

My dead wife.

ELENA.

Oh God ! how strange !

ARTEVELDE.

And wherefore?—wherefore strange?
Why should not fancy summon to its presence
This shape as soon as any?

ELENA.

Gracious heaven!
And were you not afraid?

ARTEVELDE.

I felt no fear.
Dejected I had been before: that sight
Inspired a deeper sadness, but no fear.
Nor had it struck that sadness to my soul
But for the dismal cheer the thing put on,
And the unsightly points of circumstance
That sullied its appearance and departure.

ELENA.

For how long saw you it?

ARTEVELDE.

I cannot tell.
I did not mark.

ELENA.

And what was that appearance
You say was so unsightly?

ARTEVELDE.

She appeared

In white, as when I saw her last, laid out
After her death; suspended in the air
She seemed, and o'er her breast her arms were crossed;
Her feet were drawn together pointing downwards,
And rigid was her form and motionless.
From near her heart, as if the source were there,
A stain of blood went wavering to her feet.
So she remained inflexible as stone
And I as fixedly regarding her.
Then suddenly, and in a line oblique,
Thy figure darted past her, whereupon,
Though rigid still and straight, she downward moved,
And as she pierc'd the river with her feet
Descending steadily, the streak of blood
Peeled off upon the water, which, as she vanished,
Appeared all blood, and swelled and weltered sore,
And midmost in the eddy and the whirl
My own face saw I, which was pale and calm
As death could make it:—then the vision passed,
And I perceived the river and the bridge,
The mottled sky and horizontal moon,

The distant camp, and all things as they were.

ELENA.

If you are not afraid to see such things,
I am to hear them. Go not near that bridge ;—
You said that something happened there before—
Oh, cross it not again, my dearest Philip.

ARTEVELDE.

The river cannot otherwise be passed.

ELENA.

Oh, cross it not !

ARTEVELDE.

That were a strange resolve,
And to the French most acceptable : yes,
You will be held of council with King Charles,
Opposing thus my passage.

Enter VAUCLAIRE and VAN RYK.

Sirs, good day !

You're soon astir for men that watched so late.

VAUCLAIRE.

And you, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

For me, my eyes untasked

Close with the owl's and open with the lark's ;
Almost have they forgot the use of sleep
Have any scouts come in ?

VAN RYK.

Yes, two, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Ah ! and with tidings ? Nothing good, I know ;
But let me hear.

VAUCLAIRE.

In truth, it is not good.

They say that Poperinguen, Rousselaere,
And Thorout have declared for France.

ARTEVELDE.

Three more !

That is a heavy falling-off, my friends,
And arrantly ill-timed. Despatch ! despatch !
The cure for these defections must be found
At any hazard. Forward must we press,
And try our fortune ere another town
Can find occasion to play foul.

VAUCLAIRE.

To-night,

If I mistake not, they would reach us here ;

And better were it, in my mind, the stream
Should be betwixt us, than as much dry land.

ARTEVELDE.

We will to council, and consider there
What may be best. If they be here to-night,
We may abide them. Whither away, Vauclaire?

VAUCLAIRE.

You'll wish, my lord, to have the scouts, and others
That are informed, before you.

ARTEVELDE.

It were well.

[*Exit* VAUCLAIRE.]

And thou, Van Ryk, go round, and fetch to council
The captains of the host.

[*Exit* VAN RYK.]

This troubles me.

Three towns, and two before!—a deadly blow!

ELENA.

Oh say not so; when once they know you're near,
The towns will all hold out—all will be well.
Your presence ever righted your affairs,
Whatever was amiss.

ARTEVELDE.

Two months ago,

My presence was a spell omnipotent
That seemed of power to win me all the world.
But now my fortune wears a faded beauty ;
And as some dame, her hour of conquest past,
Repairs her ravaged charms, and here a tooth
Replaces, where the flesh had else fallen in
Making a wrinkle in the rounded cheek,
And there the never more redundant locks
Replenishes—so do I waste my pains
In patching fortunes which are past their prime.
It is a useless trouble ; by my faith,
A most unprofitable, idle charge.
So soon as my advance made Courtray sure,
Thence sent I with all speed to Rousselaere
My best of chatelains, Walraven. Nay !
Labour in vain ! Precautions and endeavours
Null, fruitless all !

ELENA.

Too anxious, Artevelde,

And too impatient are you grown of late.

You used to be so calm and even-minded,
That nothing ruffled you.

ARTEVELDE.

I stand reproved.

'Tis time and circumstance that tries us all ;
And they that temperately take their start,
And keep their souls indifferently sedate
Through much of good and evil, at the last
May find the weakness of their hearts thus tried.
My cause appears more precious than it did
In its triumphant days.

ELENA.

You prize it more
The more it is endangered.

ARTEVELDE.

Even so.

A mother dotes upon the reckling child
More than the strong ; solicitous cares, sad watchings,
Rallies, reverses, all vicissitudes,
Give the affection exercise and growth.
So is it in the nursing a sick hope.

Enter VAUCLAIRE'S LIEUTENANT.

LIEUTENANT.

The captains are in council met, my lord,
And wait upon your leisure.

ARTEVELDE.

I am coming.

LIEUTENANT.

My master, sir, has heard, he bade me say,
That Cassel has revolted.

ARTEVELDE.

What of that ?

LIEUTENANT.

He wished that you should know it first, my lord,
And judge if it were fit to be disclosed
Before the council.

ARTEVELDE.

Fit to be disclosed !

Pooh ! Tell the council I am coming. No ;
I'll have no secrets. And for this forsooth,
What is it but that we are in the moult,

And here's a feather fallen ? Say I come.

[*Exit LIEUTENANT.*]

Another stab, and in a vital part !

For Cassel's defalcation is no less.

'Twere hard to keep a secret that is shared
By yonder ape ; my nose took note of that,
Admonished by the musk upon his beard
As up and down his salutations tost it,
Like a hen drinking. Well, it matters not.

The battle now is all, and that to win
Were to win back my losses ; that to lose
Were to make all that I had lost before
Into one sum of loss.

ELENA.

I feel assured

That you will win the day !

ARTEVELDE.

You choose to say so.

Elena, think not that I stand in need
Of false encouragement. I have my strength,
Which, though it lie not in the sanguine mood,
Will answer my occasions. To yourself,

Though to none other, I at times present
The gloomiest thoughts that gloomy truths inspire,
Because I love you. But I need no prop;
Nor could I find it in a tinsel show
Of prosperous surmise. Before the world
I wear a cheerful aspect, not so false
As for your lover's solace you put on;
Nor in my closet does the oil run low,
Or the light flicker.

ELENA.

Lo now ! you are angry
Because I try to cheer you.

ARTEVELDE.

No, my love,
Not angry ; that I never was with you;
But as I deal not falsely with my own,
So would I wish the heart of her I love
To be both true and brave ; nor self-beguiled,
Nor putting on disguises for my sake,
As though I faltered. I have anxious hours,
As who in like extremities hath not ?
But I have something stable here within
Which bears their weight.

Enter Van Ryk.

I keep the council waiting;
Here comes Van Ryk to tell me so.

ELENA.

'Twas I,
Master Van Ryk, that stayed him: 'tis my fault,
And lest I make it more, I'll take me hence.

[*Exit.*

VAN RYK.

The council can abide your time, my lord.
There waits without a stranger just arrived,
Whom it were well you speak with ere you go.
He will not lift his beaver save to you,
But boldly calls himself an arrant traitor
That left the French last night, and seeks your camp
To sell you what he knows.

ARTEVELDE.

Desert to me!

I thought desertion looked the other way.
What is he like?

VAN RYK.

I think he is of rank.

In his deportment knightly eyes might see
What they would gladly imitate.

ARTEVELDE.

Of rank !

This is the very madness of desertion !

Go, fetch him in.

[*Exit VAN RYK.*

Thorout and Poperinguen !

Cassel and Rousselaere ! And who, I wist,
Can keep a town's allegiance on its legs,
If not Walraven ?

Re-enter VAN RYK, conducting SIR FLEUREANT OF HEURLÉE in armour, and wearing his vizor closed.

Give us leave, Van Ryk.

[*Exit VAN RYK.*

Well, sir ! your pleasure ? and say first by whom
My camp is honoured thus.

SIR FLEUREANT.

By one, my lord,

Known to your host by all reproachful names
Of miscreant, perfidious traitor, knave,
Caitiff, and cur.

ARTEVELDE.

These, sir, are shrewd additions,
And not, I hope, deserved.

SIR FLEUREANT.

They have been so ;
Had not contrition washed desert with tears,
They were so still. I am that perjured knight,
Fleureant of Heurlée.

ARTEVELDE.

Art thou he indeed ?
What brings thee hither ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

That which brings the proud
To crave a low equality with dust ;
Which arms the lover lorn, the suitor cast, the sinner
caught,
The courtier supplanted, with the knife,
Or bowl, or halter—for their several griefs
The sovereign cures. My lord, what brings me here
Is of that grain—a loathing of my life ;
And, to come closer, such a sort of grief
As wrung Iscariot's heart when forth he went
And hung himself upon the field of blood,

Has made me thus (in my Aceldama
The sin of self-destruction partly spared)
To run upon your sword.

ARTEVELDE.

I am not bound
To find thee in a hangman. Go thy ways !
Thou art a slight, inconstant, violent man.

SIR FLEUREANT.

My lord, I come prepared for your disdain,
And slender were I in my penitence
If I should not confess it well bestowed.
But light and fickle as you justly deem me,
To one fixed purpose am I wedded now
For better and for worse—'tis to repair
The wrong that I have done you, and to die.

ARTEVELDE.

Sir, you may live or die, as likes you best.
It is your own affair ; to me all's one.
The hurt your treachery has done to me
Can neither be repeated nor repaired.
No further harm can follow from your life,
Save in the sundering my time and thoughts
From matters of more moment.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Pause, my lord,

Ere you pronounce me as inept for good
As I am harmless. Slight me as you may,
You cannot cast me in mine own esteem
More low than where I lie ; I scorn myself
With such a bitterness as bars all taste
Of other's scorn. But from this bitter tree
Good fruitage, if so please you, you may pluck.
I have been well esteemed for soldiership,
And none can better know your enemy's host,
Where soft, where hard, where rotten, and where
sound,
Their hopes and fears, the order of their march,
Their counsels and intents. If all I know
With what small service I by deeds might render,
May be accepted as a sacrifice
My conscience to appease, I die content.

ARTEVELDE.

Methinks I barely comprehend your conscience ;
For sickened with one treasonable poison,
'Twould seem to seek another for a cure.
What says your conscience on your king's behalf ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

It says, my lord, that there all claims are cancelled,
All ties dissolved ; for never was a knight
Of prowess known, more thanklessly repaid,
More scurvily entreated, than by him
And by his ingrate uncles and his court
Was Fleureant of Heurlée.

ARTEVELDE.

Are you there !

Ah ! now I understand you. Come this way;
My council is awaiting me. Ere night
I will speak further with you. Until when—

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

THE ROYAL PAVILION IN THE FRENCH CAMP AT
MOUNT DORRE, ON THE WESTERN BANK OF THE
LIS, AT THE DISTANCE OF A LEAGUE FROM
ROSEBECQUE.

The King is discovered rising from supper, and bidding adieu to his uncles, the Admiral of France, the Lord of Coucy, and a number of

other guests who are leaving the Pavilion. SIR GUY OF BAVEUX is in attendance, and the DUKE OF BURGUNDY remains behind the others.

THE KING.

My lords, we wish you all a sweet good night.
Sir Constable—he's gone—Sir Constable—
Run after him, Sir Guy, and bring him back.

[*Exit SIR GUY OF BAVEUX.*

Uncle of Burgundy, what says your grace?
Shall it be now?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY

Fair cousin, now or never.

[*Exit.*

THE KING.

He will be mightily displeased! I swear
I have no heart to speak it! Me! I quake.

Re-enter SIR GUY OF BAVEUX with SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

We called you back, Sir Oliver; you heard not.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Your grace shall pardon me; my ears are dull;

A blow was dealt upon my head at Nantes
That something stunned my hearing.

THE KING.

Sir, the love

We bear you is well known ; and for this night
And for the morrow, out of love and grace,
We would that you should tarry by our person,
And give your baton to my Lord of Coucy.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Most gracious sir ! I am amazed at this !
I do beseech you hear me. Well I know
No greater honour can your servant share
Than to help guard your person ; but, dear sir,
Think how the van should marvel, first to miss me
At such a time ! Sir, do not shake them so ;
Nor do not, I entreat your majesty,
Unsettle what advisedly was fixed
To be for your advantage. Be assured
(I say it with all deference to such counsel
As may have moved your majesty to this)
The parting from your purposes thus late
Will put you in much peril. For myself
I have performed my function with such zeal

As doth not, I am bold to say, deserve
That I should be degraded.

THE KING.

Constable,

I know that you have well discharged your office
In my time and my father's ; 'tis the great trust
And sure affiance, that both he and I
Have ever placed in you, which makes me speak
To have you still beside me in this business.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Most noble sir, you are so well begirt
With valiant men, and all is so well ordered,
That nought can be amended. Wherefore, sir,
You and your council ought to be content.
I pray you, sir, maintain me in mine office,
And if I err not, you will find no cause
To-morrow to repent it.

THE KING.

By St. Denis,

Good constable, your pleasure shall be mine ;
So exercise your office at your will,
And I will say no more ; for by St. Denis,
You have seen further into this than I,

Or they that moved me in the matter first.
To-morrow come to me at mass.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Kind sir,

Most willingly I will. God keep your grace !
All has been well disposed. The rear is up,
Save only skeletons of squadrons dropped
Upon our line of march : with tents and fires
They make a show of forces left behind,
So to beguile the Fleming, who will deem
We are not whole. God give your grace good rest !

THE KING.

Good night, sir constable. To bed, to bed !

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.

VAN ARTEVELDE'S PAVILION, IN HIS CAMP, ON THE
EASTERN SIDE OF THE LIS, AS IN THE LAST SCENE
BUT ONE.

It is night. VAN ARTEVELDE is discovered sleeping upon a low couch beside the embers of a fire.
ELENA enters.

ELENA.

My lord—Van Artevelde—up, up, my lord !

I never knew him to sleep sound before !

Awake, my lord, awake !

ARTEVELDE.

Charge once again !

ELENA.

Awake, Van Artevelde !

ARTEVELDE.

Fall back ! all's lost !

Not by the bridge—no, no, no, no, no, no.

ELENA.

Arouse yourself, Van Artevelde, awake !

ARTEVELDE (*awaking*).

Elena, love, fly, fly ! Eh ! what's the matter ?

ELENA.

Nay, start not—it is only my surmise ;

But I could deem the Frenchman was afoot.

ARTEVELDE.

Why think you so ? Van Ryk ! what ho ! Van Ryk !

ELENA.

I could not sleep, and sate without the tent,

And sudden from the river seemed to rise

A din of battle, mixed with lengthened shouts

That sounded hollow like a windy thaw.

I looked, and in the cloudy western sky
There was a glow of red, and then the cries
Were less confused, and I believed I heard
' Mount Joye, St. Denis ! ' ' Flanders and the Lion ! '
With that I came to waken you.

ARTEVELDE.

Van Ryk ! —

I'll go myself and hearken. Where's my page ?
Send for Van Ryk, I say.

(*He passes to the door of the tent.*)

ELENA.

Courage, my soul !
Play thou the heroine's part for one half hour,
And ever after take thy woman's way.

ARTEVELDE (*returning*).

Who is within ?

. . . Enter an ATTENDANT.

Bid them to sound my trumpet.

[*Exit the ATTENDANT, and soon after a reveillée is sounded without. Then VAN RYK enters.*

ARTEVELDE.

What watch is this we keep ? Here's battle join'd
And none of us astir !

VAN RYK.

Not so, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Heard you not war-cries coming from the river ?

VAN RYK.

'Tis true, my lord, both they that had the watch
And I myself, believed we heard a fight,
With shouts and hootings on the river's marge ;
But sending there, nought was there to be seen,
Nought to be heard, nor was a Frenchman stirring.
This thus made sure, we deemed to rouse yourself,
Or waken up the host, should bring us blame ;
Wherefore we let it pass.

ARTEVELDE.

'Tis very strange.

VAN RYK.

It was as much a battle to the ear
As sound could make it.

ELENA.

Saw you not besides
A redness in the sky ?

VAN RYK.

Yes, a red light;

But that was cast from fires beneath the hedges
Upon Mount Dorre.

ARTEVELDE.

This is a phantom fight.

The ghosts of them that are to fall to-morrow
(To-day I might have said, for day is breaking)
Rehearse their parts. Van Ryk, we'll sleep no more.
My trumpet hath been sounded, and by this
The host is arming. We will sleep no more
Till we have tried our fortune. Bid Vauclaire
And Ukenheim and Roosdyk, when they're armed,
Meet me below beside the willow-grove.
Bid silence to be kept through all the host.
What think'st thou of the day? Will it be bright?

VAN RYK.

A mist is spreading from the river up:
I think, my lord, it shall not clear away
Till sunrise, or it may be not till noon.

ARTEVELDE.

That is all well. Send me the captains there.

[*Exit VAN RYK.*

I go, my fairest ! Should I not return,
There's nothing here that I shall leave with pain
Except thyself, my beautiful Elena !
What strange forgetfulness appears it now
So many mis-spent moments to have given
To any thing but love ! They're gone for ever
With all their wasted sunshine ! Now is left
One moment but to spare, one word to speak ;
Farewell, my dearest love !

ELENA.

Farewell, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

God and good angels guard thee through all time,
My ever-loved Elena ! and if here
We meet no more, God grant us so to die
In peace with Him, that we may meet hereafter.
Farewell, my best-beloved !

ELENA.

Farewell, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

And is it thus we part ? Enough, enough ;
Full hearts, few words. Yet I have more to say.
I might have wiselier done and kindlier too,

More righteously and clearly to my conscience,
Touching the tie between us, than I have.
For reparation of this fatal fault
I would that I might be preserved to-day ;
If not, I know that I shall fall forgiven.

ELENA.

Try me no further, Artevelde ; go, go ;
If I should speak to thee one word of love
I could not hold myself on this side reason.
Go whilst I have my senses, Artevelde ;
Or stay and hear the passion of my heart
Break out,—and not in words ; if throes and shrieks
Thou wouldest be fain to witness, stay ; if not
Content thee with one bitter word, adieu !

ARTEVELDE.

This fair hand trembles. Dearest, be thou calm ;
Calm and courageous. I commend thy silence.
Yonder's the Knight of Heurlée ; he is coming
To summon me away.

ELENA.

Oh God ! I hate him !

Why is he with thee whereso'er thou goest ?
It sends a very horror to my heart

To see his fiendish face ! Why is it he
That comes to bring thee ?

ARTEVELDE.

Dearest, what imports it ?
Thou art disturbed with passion.

ELENA.

Oh ! I sink !
Call for my women.

ARTEVELDE.

Ho ! Cecile !

Enter CECILE.

There, take her.

CECILE.

She will be better soon, my lord.

ARTEVELDE.

Say worse :

'Tis better for her to be thus bereft.
One other kiss on that bewitching brow,
Pale hemisphere of charms ! Unhappy girl !
The curse of beauty was upon thy birth,
Nor love bestowed a blessing. Fare thee well !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE LIS.

*A watch-fire in advance of the French Encampment.*Two SOLDIERS *of the Watch.*FIRST SOLDIER (*sings*).

Four stakes and a mat
 Make a very good house :
'Tis ill-found, quoth the rat ;
 Not a whit, said the louse.

SECOND SOLDIER.

The devil catch thy breath and mar thy singing !
The trumpets of the Flemish host may sound,
And nothing to be heard for thy fond ballads.

FIRST SOLDIER (*still singing*).

More happy are we than the count and the earl,
More happy are we than the gold-hatching churl,
Than the squire and friar, and seller and buyer,
Than he that is high, who still sees something higher .

Your ear and I'll tell you
 The why and the wherefore—
He that hath nothing
 Hath nothing to care for.

SECOND SOLDIER.

Be still, I say ; I hear a trumpet now.
Hark ! hush ! now—there—a trumpet clear as day !
'Tis a reveillée ; bundle up your blankets,
And hie we to the captain of the watch. [Exeunt.

SCENE VII.

THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE LIS.

VAN ARTEVELDE, *his PAGE, and SIR FLEUREANT
OF HEURLÉE.*

ARTEVELDE.

They gather on the left. Fly to Vauclare,
And bid him when he sees me pass the bridge,
To drive his force along as though the devil
Were at his heels.

[Exeunt VAN ARTEVELDE and PAGE.

SIR FLEUREANT.

He is at your's, my lord.

[Exit.

SCENE VIII.

A RISING GROUND, ENTRENCHED AND STRONGLY GUARDED, IN THE REAR OF THE FRENCH HOST.

The KING attended by the LORDS of COUCY and POICTIERS, the BASTARD of ST. POULE, &c. MESSENGERS arriving and departing.

THE KING.

Here comes another—well sir—tell me—what?

MESSENGER.

Sire, when Van Artevelde had crossed the bridge—

THE LORD OF COUCY.

What! crossed the bridge alive?

THE KING.

Well, well; what then?

MESSENGER.

He poured himself upon the Breton flank,
Which stumbled back a step, but rallied soon,
Spurred by the lords of Saimpi and St. Just,
Who hastened to the spot; and there it is
That now the battle rages.

THE KING.

Ho ! my horse !

My lords, do you your pleasures ; it is mine
To get upon my horse and take what's going.

THE LORD OF POICTIERS.

Your majesty should bear in mind——another !

Enter a SECOND MESSENGER.

THE KING.

Whence com'st thou ? speak.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Sire, I was sent to say
Van Artevelde was killed ; so went the cry
Where I was—on the right ; but coming hither
The knight of Saimpi did I jump withal
Borne wounded to the rear, and learnt from him
That Artevelde was living, proof whereof
He bore upon his body, for his wounds
Were got in fighting with him hand to hand.

THE KING.

My horse ! I'll fight him hand to hand myself !
Stay you, my lords, or go ; I mount my horse.

THE LORD OF COUCY.

Have with your grace ! I cannot blame you much,
Though you shall fret your uncles.

THE KING.

By St. Denis !

Rather than stay I'll fight my uncles too.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

A PART OF THE FIELD ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF
THE LIS.

VAN ARTEVELDE attended by several OFFICERS and
PAGES.

ARTEVELDE.

Who's here ? Fly, Sibrand, to the further left ;
Bid Eversdyk and Alphen wheel their force
To prop me on my flank. [*Exit SIBRAND.*

Enter a MESSENGER.

Run thou, De Roo—

MESSENGER.

Vauclaire, my lord, is slain.

ARTEVELDE.

Is slain—hah—slain—

Thou to the rear De Roo, and bid Van Ryk
Keep open passage on the bridge. Thou, Paul——

Enter a Second MESSENGER.

SECOND MESSENGER.

Roosdyk, my lord, is dying of his wounds.

ARTEVELDE.

I cannot help it. Keep the causeway clear,
And summon Reehorst to my aid. We shake.
The cry is, still, Van Artevelde is slain.
Go make it known I live. Up with my cry !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE X.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD STILL ON THE
WESTERN SIDE OF THE LIS.

THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY, SIR FLEUREANT OF
HEURLÉE and *Followers.*

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Another charge like that—ill-sorted knaves !
They stumbled on each other, each by each
Pegged in and pinioned. Now they're loose enough.

Another charge—they scurry to Mount Dorre.
We'll drive them up the hill, and from the top
Like a staved cask shall they be trundled down.
What wait we for?

SIR FLEUREANT.

Truly the cask rings hollow;
Yea, sir, the wine is spilt that made them bold.
Lo ! yonder goes the king.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

What ! breaking bounds !
He must not be before us. Scale the hill.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE XI.

ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD, ON THE SAME SIDE
OF THE LIS, NEAR THE BRIDGE.

VAN ARTEVELDE and VAN RYK.

ARTEVELDE.

I bleed, Van Ryk. Can any thing be done ?
For if there can, my spirit's sight is dimmed,
And I discern it not.

VAN RYK.

To fly, my lord,

Is what remains.

ARTEVELDE.

To fly ! Then mount my horse,
And make away before the general flight
Chokes up the bridge.

VAN RYK.

Not I, my lord. Your horse
Should bear his proper burthen : mount yourself.

ARTEVELDE.

Never, Van Ryk. My errand upon earth
Ends in this overthrow. Bind up my wound ;
Give me but strength again to reach the field,
And I will carve myself a nobler death
Than they designed me. God would not permit
That I should fall by any hand so base
As his who hurt me thus.

VAN RYK.

Whose hand was that ?

ARTEVELDE.

Sir Fleureant's : he stabbed me on the bridge,
And fled amongst the French.

VAN RYK.

O, monstrous deed !

ARTEVELDE.

I hid it whilst I could, which was not long ;
And being seen so tottering in my seat,
The rumour ran that I was hurt to death,
And then they staggered. Lo ! we're flying all !
Mount, mount, old man ; at least let one be saved !
Roosdyk ! Vauclaire ! the gallant and the kind !
Who shall inscribe your merits on your tombs ?
May mine tell nothing to the world but this :
That never did that prince or leader live,
Who had more loyal or more loving friends !
Let it be written that fidelity
Could go no farther. Mount, old friend, and fly !

VAN RYK.

With you, my lord, not else. A fear-struck throng
Comes rushing from Mount Dorre. Sir, cross the
bridge.

ARTEVELDE.

The bridge ! my soul abhors—but cross it thou ;
And take this token to my Love, Van Ryk.
Fly for my sake in hers, and take her hence ;

It is my last command. See her conveyed
To Ghent by Olsen, or what safer road
Thy prudence shall descry. This do, Van Ryk—
Lo ! now they pour upon us like a flood !—
Thou that didst never disobey me yet,
This last good office render me. Begone !
Fly whilst the way is free.

VAN RYK.

My lord, alas !

You put my duty to the sternest test
It ever yet endured ; but I obey.
I do beseech you come across the bridge ;
This rush of runaways——

ARTEVELDE.

Farewell, Van Ryk.

VAN RYK.

Fellows, stand back ! What ! see you not my lord ?
Stand back, I say !

ARTEVELDE.

Ho ! turn ye round once more !

Cry Artevelde ! and charge them once again !
What ! courage, friends ! We yet can keep the bridge.
Three minutes but stand fast, and our reserves

Shall succour us. Heigh, heigh, sir ! who are you
That dares to touch me ?

VAN RYK.

Nay, sirs, nay, stand back.

(VAN RYK *is forced off by the crowd.*)

ARTEVELDE.

Shame on you, cowards ! what ! do you know me ! back !
Back, villains ! will you suffocate your lord ?
Back, or I'll stab you with my dagger. Oh !
Give me but space to breathe ! Now God forgive me !
What have I done ?—why such a death ?—why thus ?—
Oh ! for a wound as wide as famine's mouth,
To make a soldier's passage for my soul !

[*Exit VAN ARTEVELDE, borne along in the rout towards the bridge.*

SCENE XII.

THE SAME.

*Enter THE DUKES OF BURGUNDY and BOURBON,
with Followers on the one side, and SIR LOIS OF
SANXERE, with Followers on the other.*

SANXERE.

Halt ye a space, my lords, ye cannot pass :

The bridge has broken down beneath the weight
Of them that fly.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

A lath should bear up us,
We are so light of heart, so light of heel !
It was the leaden spirit of defeat
That brake the bridge. Shoot me a plank across,
And see if I shall strain it !

SANXERE.

Stay, my lord ;
They're pushing beams athwart the shattered arch,
And presently the passage shall be safe
For all the host ; but farther down the stream
There are some boats, though but a few, for those
Who would be foremost.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

I am of them. Who follows ?

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIII.

A PART OF THE FIELD ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF
THE LIS.

*It is strewn with the dead and wounded, and other
wreck of the battle. In front is the body of VAN*

ARTEVELDE. ELENA *is kneeling beside it.* VAN RYK *and one of VAN ARTEVELDE'S Pages are standing near.* Trumpets are heard from time to time at a distance.

VAN RYK.

Bring her away. Hark! hark!

PAGE.

She will not stir.

Either she does not hear me when I speak,
Or will not seem to hear.

VAN RYK.

Leave her to me.

Fly, if thou lov'st thy life, and make for Ghent.

[Exit PAGE.

Madam, arouse yourself; the French come fast:
Arouse yourself, sweet lady; fly with me.
I pray you hear: it was his last command
That I should take you hence to Ghent by Olsen.

ELENA.

I cannot go on foot.

VAN RYK.

No, lady, no,
You shall not need; horses are close at hand.

Let me but take you hence. I pray you, come.

ELENA.

Take *him* then too.

VAN RYK.

The enemy is near
In hot pursuit ; we cannot take the body.

ELENA.

The body ! Oh !

Enter DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

What hideous cry was that ?
What are ye ? Flemings ? Who art thou, old sir ?
Who she that flung that long funereal note
Into the upper sky ? Speak.

VAN RYK.

What I am,
Yourself have spoken. I am, as you said,
Old and a Fleming. Younger by a day
I could have wished to die ; but what of that ?
For death to be behind-hand but a day
Is but a little grief.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Well said, old man
And who is she ?

VAN RYK.

Sir, she is not a Fleming.

Enter THE KING, THE DUKE OF BOURBON, THE EARL OF FLANDERS, SIR FLEUREANT OF HEUR-LÉE, THE CONSTABLE, TRISTRAM OF LESTOVET, THE LORD OF COUCY, and many other Lords and Knights, with Guards and Attendants.

KING.

What is your parley, uncle ; who are these ?

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Your majesty shall ask them that yourself ;
I cannot make them tell.

KING.

Come on, come on !

We've sent a hundred men to search the field
For Artevelde's dead body.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Sire, for that
You shall need seek no further ; there he lies.

KING.

What, say you so ? What ! this Van Artevelde ?
God's me ! how sad a sight !

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

But are you sure ?

Lift up his head.

SIR OLIVER OF CLISSON.

Sir Fleureant, is it he ?

SIR FLEUREANT.

Sirs, this is that habiliment of flesh
Which clothed the spirit of Van Artevelde
Some half an hour agone. Between the ribs
You'll find a wound, whereof so much of this

(*Drawing his dagger.*)

As is imbruied with blood, denotes the depth.

KING.

Oh me ! how sad and terrible he looks !
He hath a princely countenance. Alas !
I would he might have lived, and taken service
Upon the better side !

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

And who is she ?

(*ELENA raises her head from the body.*)

DUKE OF BOURBON.

That *I* can answer : she's a traitress vile,
The villain's paramour.

SIR FLEUREANT.

Beseech you, sir,
Believe it not ; she was not what you think.
She did affect him, but in no such sort
As you impute, which she can promptly prove.

ELENA (*springing upon her feet*).

'Tis false ! thou liest ! I WAS his paramour.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Oh, shameless harlot ! dost thou boast thy sin ?
Aye, down upon the carrion once again !
Ho, guards ! dispart her from the rebel's carcase,
And hang it on a gibbet. Thus and thus
I spit upon and spurn it.

ELENA (*snatching ARTEVELDE'S dagger from its sheath*).

Misceant foul !

Black-hearted felon !

(*Aims a blow at the DUKE OF BOURBON,*
which SIR FLEUREANT intercepts.)

Aye, dost baulk me ! there—

As good for thee as him !

(*Stabs SIR FLEUREANT, who falls dead.*)

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Seize her ! secure her ! tie her hand and foot !

What ! routed we a hundred thousand men
Here to be slaughtered by a crazy wench !

(*The guards rush upon ELENA ; VAN RYK interposes for her defence ; after some struggle, both are struck down and slain.*)

DUKE OF BOURBON.

So ! curst untoward vermin ! are they dead ?
His very corse breeds maggots of despite !

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

I did not bid them to be killed.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

My lord,

They were so sturdy and so desperate
We could not else come near them.

KING.

Uncle, lo !

The Knight of Heurlée, too, stone dead.

SANXERE.

By Heaven,

This is the strangest battle I have known !
First we've to fight the foe, and then the captives.

DUKE OF BOURBON.

Take forth the bodies. For the woman's corse,
Let it have christian burial. As for his,

The arch-insurgent's, hang it on a tree
Where all the host may see it.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Brother, no ;

It were not for our honour, nor the king's,
To use it so. Dire rebel though he was,
Yet with a noble nature and great gifts
Was he endowed: courage, discretion, wit,
An equal temper, and an ample soul,
Rock-bound and fortified against assaults
Of transitory passion, but below
Built on a surging subterranean fire
That stirred and lifted him to high attempts.
So prompt and capable, and yet so calm,
He nothing lacked in sovereignty but the right ;
Nothing in soldiership except good fortune.
Wherfore with honour lay him in his grave,
And thereby shall increase of honour come
Unto their arms who vanquished one so wise,
So valiant, so renowned. Sirs, pass we on,
And let the bodies follow us on biers.
Wolf of the weald, and yellow-footed kite,
Enough is spread for you of meaner prey.

Other interment than your maws afford
Is due to these. At Courtray we shall sleep,
And there I'll see them buried side by side.

[*Exeunt.*

THE END.

NOTES.

PREFACE, PAGE XVI.

“Lord Byron’s conception of a hero is an evidence, not only of scanty materials of knowledge from which to construct the ideal of a human being, but also of a want of perception of what is great or noble in our nature.”

I WILL beg to extract here, as an appendix to my Preface, three or four stanzas from the conclusion of a poem written above six years ago, which will support the assertion that some of the opinions I have expressed, obnoxious as I am afraid they may at first sight appear to the charge of presumption, are not hastily hazarded, or now first adopted. The poem from which the extracts are taken, was written in anticipation of the accomplishment of the work now published, and was intended as a proem, or poetical introduction to it. But writing then with no more than a distant and indistinct prospect of publication, I was betrayed into a sort of domestic egoism, which, now that the time comes to print, I do not venture to present to public notice. The stanzas which follow, are, I trust, unobjectionable on this score; and they contain (besides the expression of opinion to which I have adverted) an acknowledgment of intellectual obligations which I am unwilling to omit, and a tribute of respect

and admiration, which I confess that it is a pleasure to me to pay in public ; and which is not improperly so paid, because the person spoken of is one with whom it cannot be said that the Public have no concern.

* * * * *

Then learned I to despise that far-famed school
 Who place in wickedness their pride, and deem
 Power chiefly to be shown where passions rule,
 And not where they are ruled : in whose new scheme
 Of heroism, self-government should seem
 A thing left out, or something to contemn,—
 Whose notions, incoherent as a dream,
 Make strength go *with* the torrent, and not stem,
 For ‘wicked and thence weak’ is not a creed for them.

I left these passionate weaklings : I perceived
 What took away all nobleness from pride,
 All dignity from sorrow ; what bereaved
 Even genius of respect ; they seemed allied
 To mendicants that by the highway side
 Expose their self-inflicted wounds, to gain
 The alms of sympathy—far best denied.
 I heard the sorrowful sensualist complain,
 If with compassion, not without disdain.

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * * *

* * * two friends

Lent me a further light, whose equal hate
 On all unwholesome sentiment attends,
 Nor whom may genius charm where heart infirm offends.

In all things else contrarious were these two :

The one, a man upon whose laurelled brow
 Grey hairs were growing ! glory ever new
 Shall circle him in after years as now,
 For spent detraction may not disavow
 The world of knowledge with the wit combined,
 The' elastic force no burthen ere could bow,
 The various talents and the single mind,
 Which give him moral power and mastery o'er mankind.

His sixty summers—what are they in truth ?

By Providence peculiarly blest,
 With him the strong hilarity of youth
 Abides, despite grey hairs, a constant guest.
 His sun has veered a point toward the west,
 But light as dawn his heart is glowing yet ;
 That heart the simplest, gentlest, kindliest, best,
 Where truth and manly tenderness are met
 With faith and heavenward hope, the suns that never set.

* * * * *

Thus nurtured, and thus disciplined in thought

By kindred and associates, strange it were
 If work of mine, though faint, should not have caught
 Some colour of transmitted light, some stir
 Of congruous emotion. If I err

In deeming that some portion of my tale
 Impersonates the virtues I aver
 To hold in admiration,—if I fail
 In this, then what is writ will be of no avail.

But if, from time to time, upon the page
 Some token of these higher aims be traced,
 Some fair ideal, borrowed from an age
 Of ruder, but of less emasculate taste,
 Some nook whence Nature hath not been displaced
 For Fashion's sake ; if mine it be to feed
 To a robust complexion, not to waste
 With idle stimulation them that read,
 Then forth upon my way I go with God to speed !

PREFACE, PAGE XII.

“ Poetry of which sense is not the basis, though it may be excellent of its kind, will not long be reputed to be poetry of the highest order.”

Till this moment, when recurring for another purpose to Mr. Wordsworth's preface to his poems, and to Mr. Coleridge's remarks upon them, in his “ Biographia Literaria,” I was not aware for how many of my tenets I was indebted to those admirable specimens of philosophical criticism. The root of the matter is to be found in them.

PREFACE, PAGE XIII.

“ He (Lord Byron) was in knowledge merely a man of belles lettres.”

I am aware that lord Byron made out a long catalogue of books read in his early youth. I cannot help feeling persuaded

that there must be mistakes in the enumeration. I have too high an opinion of lord Byron's natural capacity, to allow myself to believe, that he could have read some of the profound and philosophical works mentioned in his catalogue, without deriving benefit from them as a writer.

PART I., ACT I., SCENE I., PAGE 3.

*"For truly there are here a sort of crafts,
So factious still and obstinate," &c.*

It is curious to observe in these trade unions of the fourteenth century, compared with those of the present day, the tendency of society, from time to time, in conjunctures when the influences of physical force, commercial wealth, and prescriptive polity, reach certain approximations to an equipoise, to throw itself into something like the same forms and divisions. Our own political unions, and the effects which they are calculated to produce, have never been described in a more philosophic spirit and temper, or more forcibly, than in the speech from which the following extract is taken:—

“ That Political Unions are an evil, no one is readier to declare than I. I do not hesitate to say that such institutions are fraught with destruction more than can be calculated, destruction to all government, destruction to all property, destruction to all freedom, destruction to the very nature and characters of Englishmen. I should hate to live in a country in which such institutions predominated, (and predominate they must if they exist at all,) as I should hate to live in a country in which great measures were concerted silently and executed speedily ; in which men should meet together in multitudes, to agree upon secret schemes and spread them abroad secretly and put

them in operation secretly; in which all individual liberty and all individual responsibility, without which no man can be good or wise, or strong or happy, should be bowed into uniformity with the general will, (if through fear, bad enough, if willingly, still worse,) should be merged and melted down and mingled up into that great mass of ordered and digested opinion, in which alone consists the much boasted strength of these much boasted Political Combinations; as I should hate, in short, to live in a land where men should act in multitudes, and think in multitudes, and be free in multitudes. I do not deny that such a nation might triumph over every outward obstacle; I do not deny that, in such a nation, commerce might flourish and wealth increase; that she might be full, even to fatness, with the glory of political wealth, and political conquest, and political independence. But I do deny that any one of these things, or all these things together, make up one item in the happiness, the virtue, the wisdom, or the real freedom of a nation. I do deny that, for all these things, I would consent to make England a nation of politicians; say rather of political instruments, of men, that the whole together might be powerful, consenting to be each man a slave. I say, I do deny, that for centuries of such wealth, such glory, and such independence, I would consent to barter one hour of that domestic comfort, and domestic freedom, household strength, and household virtue, with which it is our boast to have been blest above other nations, and which all come of the sacred inheritance of *individual freedom*, the free thought of the free soul, for which the worst of *occasional convulsions* and calamities are not too dear a price to pay."

After some account of the manner in which these unions are generated, he proceeds:—

“ And there are not wanting men wiser in their generation,

with other and further views, whose game it is to excite and inflame these discontents ; men who, if they can get any hold by which to sway this ‘ huge and fiery mass of passion,’ from being the outcasts of society can make themselves its terrors ; and there is no lack of meaning and stirring phrases which spread anger and disobedience like wildfire from eye to eye and from mouth to mouth. And then begins the vast and vital disorder ; for as yet we have traced it only to its beginnings ; then begins the fearful and ever-widening breach between the very rich and the very poor ; the poor looking on the rich with hatred springing from sense of wrong, the rich upon the poor, first with cold and distant pride, then with the angry and jealous alarm of pride frightened from its propriety.’’

I have quoted these passages from an anonymous pamphlet, published by Ridgway in 1832, entitled “ Substance of a Speech against Political Unions, delivered in a Debating Society in the University of Cambridge.” It is a singular trait of the times, that a speech containing so much of sagacity and mature reflection as is to be found in this exercitation, should have been delivered in an academical debating club, and should have passed away in a pamphlet, which, as far as I am aware, attracted no notice. Time and place consenting, a brilliant Parliamentary reputation might be built upon a tithe of the merit.

PART I., ACT I., SCENE III., PAGE 27.

This description of Launoy’s fate is little more than a verification of the following account of it :—

“ When the Earl of Flanders came to the minster, and saw them of Ghent fly into the church, he commanded the minster to be set on fire, which was quickly done, and the fire soon mounted to the covering of the minster. Thereof they of Ghent

died in great pain, for they were burnt alive, and such of them as issued out were slain, and cast into the fire again. John Launoy, who was in the steeple, seeing himself about to be burnt, cried to them without, ‘ Ransom ! Ransom !’ and offered his coat, which was full of florins, to save his life ; but they without did but laugh at him, and said, ‘ John, come out at some window and speak with us, and we shall receive you : make a leap, as you have made some of us leap within this year ; it behoveth you so to do.’ When John Launoy found he could not escape and that the fire came so near him, he thought he had better be slain than burnt, and so he leaped out at a window among his enemies, and was there received on spears and swords, and cut to pieces, and cast into the fire again. Thus ended John Launoy.”—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cix.

PART I., ACT I., SCENE IV., PAGE 46, AND PART I., ACT II.,
SCENE I., PAGE 77.

The history of Jacques Van Artevelde, the father, is more generally known to the English reader than that of Philip, the son ; for his power lasted longer, and he was in close political connection with Edward the Third of England. “ To speak properly,” says Froissart, “ there never was in Flanders, nor in any other country, prince, duke, or other, that ruled a country so peaceably, so long as this James D’Arteville ruled Flanders.” His downfal was brought about by an attempt to stretch his power to the extent of substituting the issue of Edward the Third for that of the Earl of Flanders, in the inheritance of that territory. The good town of Ghent had long supported him in usurping the Earl’s actual authority and dominion ; but they revolted against the idea of altering the legitimate descent. “ When he returned, he came into Ghent about noon ; they of

the town knew of his coming, and many were assembled together in the street as he was to pass, and when they saw him they began to murmur, and said—‘ Behold yonder Great Master who would order all Flanders after his pleasure, which is not to be suffered.’ They also whispered through all the town, that James D’Arteville had received for nine years all the revenues of Flanders, without giving any account, and thereby hath maintained his dignity, and also sends great riches out of the country, into England privately. These expressions fired them of Ghent, and as he rode through the street he perceived that they were incensed at him, for such as had formerly made reverence to him as he passed, now turned their backs to him, and entered their houses : then he began to be alarmed, and as soon as he had entered his house, he fastened his gates, doors, and windows ; this was scarcely done before the street was full of men, and especially those of the smaller crafts. There they assailed his house both behind and before, and broke it open : he and his people within defended themselves for a long time, and slew and wounded many without ; but finally he could not sustain it, for three parts of the townsmen were at the assault. When James saw that he was so severely oppressed, he came to a window with great humility, bare-headed, and said, with fair language—‘ Good people, what ails you ? why are you so much incensed against me ? how have I displeased you ? inform me, and I shall make you amends : ’ Then those who heard him answered all with one voice—‘ We desire an account of the great treasure of Flanders that you have sent away, without any reason.’ Then James answered meekly, and said—‘ Certainly, sirs, I never took any of the treasure of Flanders ; withdraw quietly into your houses, and return in the morning, and I will give you so good an account, that you should reasonably be satisfied.’ Then they all answered—‘ Nay, we will have an account immediately, you shall not escape us so ;

we know that you have sent great riches into England without our knowledge, therefore you shall die.' When he heard this, he clasped his hands, and weeping said—' Sirs, such as I am you have made me, and you have sworn to me before this to defend me against all persons, and now you would slay me without reason; you may do it if you please, for I am but one man among so many; for God's sake take better advice, and remember the time past, and consider the great favours and courtesy that I have done you and your town: you know that commerce was nearly annihilated in this country, and by my means it is recovered; I have also governed you peaceably; for during my government ye have had all things as you could desire; corn, riches, and all sorts of merchandize.' Then they all exclaimed as with one voice, 'Come down to us, and talk not so high, and give us an account of the great treasure of Flanders, that you have controlled so long without accounting for, which is unbecoming an officer to do, to receive the goods of his lord, or of a country, without accounting.' When James saw that he could not appease them, he drew in his head and closed his window, and so thought to steal out by the back door, into a church that adjoined his house, but four hundred persons had entered into his house; and finally there he was taken and slain."

—*Froissart*, vol. i., chap. cxv.

PART I., ACT I., SCENE VII., PAGE 67.

"Nor heeds the weltering of the PLANGENT wave."

I have adopted this (as it sounds to my ears) very euphonous epithet, from a little poem called "The Errors of Ecstacie," by Mr. Darley—a poem which is full of this sort of euphony, and remarkable on other accounts.

PART I., ACT I., LAST SCENE, PAGE 70.

*“Lives, lives, my lord, take freely ;
But spare the lands and burgages and monies.
The father dead shall sleep and be forgotten ;
The patrimony gone, that makes a wound
That’s slow to heal ; heirs are above-ground ever.”*

It would be difficult to find in the works of Machiavelli a more characteristic passage than that from which the above is taken : “ Deve nondimeno il principe farsi temere in modo che, se non acquista l’amore e’ fugga l’odio ; perche può molto bene star insieme, esser temuto e non odiato ; et quando pure gli bisognasse procedere contro al sangue di qualcuno, farlo quando vi sia giustificatione conveniente, et causa manifesta ; ma sopra tutto astenersi dalla robba d’altri, perche gli uomini dimenticano più tosto la morte del padre, che la perdita del patrimonio.”— *Principe*, cap. xvii.

PART I., ACT I., LAST SCENE, PAGE 73.

*“ You know, my lord, the humour we of Ghent
Have still indulged.”*

A hundred years produced little change in the humour of the people of Ghent, whose dispositions towards peace, and a dutiful demeanour, appear to have been as equivocal under the House of Burgundy in the fifteenth century, as under that of Flanders in the fourteenth. An indication of this is to be found in a whimsical proceeding of theirs related by Commines as having taken place upon the accession of Charles the Bold. Ghent had been in rebellion against his father, Philip, but had been brought to terms, and had never whilst most disaffected to his father, shown any unfriendly dispositions towards himself; for it was indeed a proverb, that “ Ceulx de Gand aymoient bien

le filx de leur Prince, mais le Prince non jamais." Charles relying upon his former relations with Ghent, and upon the assurances of the magistrates and rich citizens that he would be received with the utmost joy and good-will, made a solemn entry into the town, on the morning of the 28th of June, 1467. He was, to all appearance, exceedingly well received. The streets were hung with the most beautiful tapestries, stages were erected from place to place on which mysteries were performed, the chimes were rung out from all the steeples, and there was every possible demonstration of loyalty and respect. One of the chief grievances of the people had been a certain tax upon corn, which had been levied to pay the expenses of a former rebellion, and which was continued, though the people were persuaded that all those expenses had been long since paid. Even this complaint, however, was scarcely heard, or but very softly uttered in the universal happiness which appeared to prevail upon the entry of the Duke into his good town of Ghent. The day of his entry happened to be that of the celebration of the martyrdom of St. Liévin, who was the favourite Saint of the mean crafts. According to their use on this day they carried him in procession in his shrine to the village of Holtheim, the spot of his martyrdom, where they passed the night with him, taking him back the next day to the Church of St. Bavon, which was his ordinary place of abode. Directly on their way back through the Market-place to the Church, stood the house which had been erected for the purpose of levying there the obnoxious gabelle upon corn. They knocked the shrine against the wall of the house, and then, alleging that the Saint would not turn out of the straight road, they forthwith levelled the building to the ground, and carried him over the ruins. The indignation of Charles the Bold may easily be imagined;

but for once he was brought to feel the necessity of placing his temper under restraint, and after incurring some danger by giving way to the first burst of anger, he betook himself to dissimulation and fair words, and departed from the city ostensibly in peace.—*Comines*, lib. ii., chap. iv., and *Barante*, vol. ix., p. 7.

PART I., ACT II., SCENE I., PAGE 78.

*“And wenches who were there said Artevelde
Was a sweet name and musical to hear.”*

I have thought it expedient to confine to the female portion of the White-Hood party this motive for placing themselves under the command of Van Artevelde; though the historian relates, without any such limitation, that he was chosen for the reason, amongst others, that his name was “Le mieulx seant à prononcer.”

PART I., ACT II., SCENE III., PAGE 92.

*“And thou who wert a gentle-hearted man,
Must lead these monsters where they will.”*

It is a remark of Cicero that, “bellorum civilium ii semper sunt exitus, ut non ea solùm fiant quæ velit victor, sed etiam ab iis mos gerendus sit, quibus adjutoribus parta sit victoria.”

PART I., ACT II., LAST SCENE, PAGE 135.

“Think of your mariners.”

The relatives of the earl's bailiff, who had been slain by the White-Hoods, as Froissart says, “somewhat revenged the death of their cousin,” by seizing the crews of forty ships belonging

to Ghent, and putting out their eyes."—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. lxxxviii.

PART I., ACT IV., SCENE I., PAGE 172.

I have borrowed, in this place, a line from a poem by a near relative, who died several years ago, at an early age. I will take this opportunity of printing that poem, persuaded that by those who can appreciate the strain of thought and feeling which pervades it, the indulgence of a natural wish to preserve it will not be thought unreasonable.

MONOLOGUE. SCENE, IN THE MOUNTAINS.

(*The Speaker above one hundred years old*)—Time, early Morning.

Dawn smiles ; around the golden isle of heav'n
Break the white-rushing clouds in paler spray ;
Till down among the eastern heights she sets,
And night, a second night, a paler shade,
Van-courier of the morn, is on the skies.
Twilight with trembling fingers sketches there
Vast outlines, mountains summitless, grey wastes,
Now caught against the clouds, and now all dark.
Forth from the bosoms of those shadowy mounds
Launch the fresh breezes on their early voyage,
And the dark eaglets from their aëries watch
The nearing sun..... Sounds, that are gathering round me,
And the half-distinguished landscape's glimmerings,
Rouse in my heart the waning thoughts of times
That have past far away..... a concourse strange
As haunts that eve when charnels give to air
Their white-robed tenantry ;—worn out Remembrance
Puts forth her light, that, like the eternal lamps

Of tombs, burns only to illuminate
Sepulchral gloom, and cheer cold isolation.
These oaks have waved here for a hundred years
Since I first knew this vale, and they which fiung
Around, below, a wide and rustling shade,
A green pavilion, broad and beautiful,
Have withered into leafless stocks ; alas !
There is no blessing in so long a life ;
I left this valley yet a little child,
And have returned beneath a load of years ;
Men with grey beards look up to me ; yea dotards
Ask of their ancestry from me ; and dames
Pray in their folly that their infants reach
Such age as mine ; and the babes gaze with awe
At the old Gaffer's long white beard, and ask
Who in the valleys is so old as he ?
Men have seen changes—mighty changes wrought—
And in few years—and over potent states—
Have not the raven and the vulture dwelt
Among the empty stones of Judah's towers ?
Have not the desert-rushes waved in Tyre ?
Babes held the princedom of Jerusalem ?
Slaves worn the purple of most mighty Rome ?
Aye ! and the growth of yonder mountain firs
Where I was wont to have my gay expanse
Of garden-ground, gives me a deeper sadness
Than mournful tales of ruined monarchies,
Dismantled cities, nations past away.—
Morn of white front and pearly eye ! that now
Thy kindly salutations giv'st to all,
I cannot win one joyful thought from thee :
I view thy roseate chaplettings of cloud

With an untempered fancy, the cold spleen
And heartless weariness of extreme age,
A weak recoil from all that's gay and fair ;
For the young mind clings at the first approach
Of Pleasure's magnet ; but we travel on,
Creep to the further pole, and are repelled.
Life's earliest fountain-gush is pure from heaven,
And all the after-stream with earth-sprung taints,
And gathering lutulence, made foul : and mine
Hath spread into a dark, unhealthful marsh ;
An obstinate stagnation.—They are all,
All gone ;—with whom how fondly once I loved
To seek this height and wander thro' yon dells ;
None left upon the earth ; all laid beneath ;—
Death, like a kindly shepherd, came to them,
When they were straying in the vale of years,
And took them to their fold, and bade them sleep ;
But he hath been to me a jealous master ;
Hovering for years around me, with approach
Enfeebling, but forbearing still to touch,
He tempts, with outstretched hand, and disappoints.
'Tis hard—to feel cheeks wrinkle-ploughed like these
Wetted with tears—Not yet ! I have not yet,
Old as I am, reached second infancy ;
My soul hath lost her fire, but not her force.
Dry up, thou sun, these drops ! Remembrance struck
This arid rock, and they have gushed unbidden.—
But that is o'er ; and high Resolve hath set
Her seal upon the heart ; and I will gaze,
With a clear eye and steady lip, around,
On hill and heath, that are the cenotaphs
Of those I will not name again.—'Tis day

Back to the vale ; to men ; to life ! I bear,
Within me, warm and urgent thanksgivings
For the gifts left me ; the time-scorning power,
And constancy of thought ;—the unchanged command,
And might of the invulnerable mind.

He died within two or three days after he had completed his twentieth year. If a powerful reasoning faculty and an ardent and affluent imagination be, as I believe, the constituents of true genius, he was possessed of it.

PART I., ACT V., SCENE VIII., PAGE 248, ET SEQ.

It is impossible to represent the earl's adventures upon his defeat at Bruges, with more of dramatic effect than belongs to them, as related by Froissart :—

“ In the mean time that the Earl was at his lodging, and sent forth the clerks of every ward from street to street, to have every man to draw to the market-place to recover the town, they of Ghent pursued their enemies so fiercely, that they entered into the town with them of Bruges ; and as soon as they were within the town, the first thing they did they went straight to the market-place, and there set themselves in array. The Earl had then sent a knight of his, called Sir Robert Mareschault, to the gate, to see what they of Ghent did ; and when he came to the gate he found it beaten down, and the enemy masters of the passage : and some of them of Bruges met with him, and said—‘ Sir Robert, return and save yourself if you can, for the town is in the possession of our enemies.’ Then the knight returned to the Earl as fast as he could, who was coming out of his lodging on horseback, with a great number of cressets and torches with him, and was going to the market-place ; and as he was

entering, such as were before him, seeing their enemies all ranged in the place, said to the Earl—‘Sir, return again ; if you go any farther you will be killed or taken by your enemies, for they are ranged in the market-place, and wait for you.’ They shewed him truth. And when the conquerors saw those clear lights coming down the street, they said—‘Yonder cometh the Earl, he will fall into our hands.’ And Philip D’Arteville had commanded, from street to street, as he went, that if the Earl came among them, no man should do to him any bodily harm, but take him alive, and then have him to Ghent, and so to make their peace as they pleased. The Earl, who hoped to have recovered all, came near to the place where they of Ghent were. Then divers of his men said—‘Sir, go no further, for your enemies are lords of the market-place and of the town ; if you enter into the market place, you are in danger of being taken or slain : a great number of your enemies are going from street to street, seeking their enemies ; they have certain of them of the town to conduct them from house to house, where they would be ; and, sir, you cannot issue out of any of the gates, for the enemy is possessed of them ; nor can you return to your own lodging, for your enemies are going thither.’ And when the Earl heard those tidings, which much distressed him, as may be imagined, he was greatly alarmed, and considered the danger he was in. Then he believed the counsel, and would go no farther, but endeavour to save himself ; and so he took his own counsel. He commanded all the lights to be put out ; and said to them that were about him—‘I see well there is no recovery ; let every man depart, and save himself as well as he can.’ And it was done as he commanded ; the lights were quenched and cast into the street, and every man departed. The Earl then went into a back lane, and made a varlet of his to unarm him, and cast away his armour, and put on an old

cloak of his varlet's, and then said to him—‘ Go thy way from me, and save yourself if you can ; and have a good tongue if you fall into the hands of your enemies ; and if they ask any thing of me, do not acknowledge that I am in the town.’ He answered and said—‘ Sir, I had rather die than betray you.’ Thus about the hour of midnight the Earl went from street to street and by back lanes, so that at last he was fain to take a house, or else he had been taken by his enemies ; and so as he went about the town, he entered into a poor woman's house, which was not fit for such a lord : there was neither hall, parlour, nor chamber ; it was a poor smoky house ; there was nothing but one poor place, black with smoke, and above a small room with a ladder of seven steps to go up to it ; and in that room was a mean couch, where the poor woman's children lay. Then the Earl, much alarmed and trembling, said as he entered—‘ O good woman, save me ! I am thy lord, the Earl of Flanders ; but now I must hide myself, for my enemies pursue me ; and if you do me a service now, I shall reward you for it hereafter.’ The poor woman knew him well, for she had been often at his gate to fetch alms, and had often seen him going and returning from sporting ; so she immediately consented, for if she had made any delay, he had been taken talking with her by the fire. Then she said—‘ Sir, mount up this ladder, and lay yourself under the bed you find there, where my children sleep.’ And in the mean time the woman sat down by the fire with another child that she had in her arms. So the Earl mounted the ladder as well as he could, and crept between the couch and the straw, and lay as flat as possible. And immediately some of his enemies entered the house, for some of them said they had seen a man enter the house before them ; and so they found the woman sitting at the fire with her child. Then they said—‘ Good woman, where is the man we saw enter this house before us, and

shut the door after him?' 'Sirs,' quoth she, I saw no man enter here this night: I went out just now and cast out a little water, and shut my door again. If any were here, I could not hide him; you see all my house at once; here is my bed, and up this ladder lie my poor children.' Then one of them took a candle and mounted up the ladder, and looked and saw only the poor couch where the children lay asleep; and so he looked all about, and then said to his company—' Let us go hence, we are losing time: the poor woman speaks the truth, here is no creature but she and her children:' and then they departed out of the house. After that, there was none entered to do any hurt. All these words the Earl heard well, while he lay under the couch: you may suppose he was in great fear for his life. He might well say—' I am now one of the poorest princes in the world: how uncertain are the affairs of this world!' Yet it was fortunate he escaped with his life: howbeit this dangerous adventure might well be to him a memorial all his life after, and an example to all others."—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cxxxii.

The Earl's final escape is thus told:—

"I was informed, and I believe it to be true, that on the Sunday at night the Earl of Flanders issued out of the town of Bruges, by what means I cannot say, but I believe he was assisted. He issued out all alone on foot, in an old simple cloak; and when he came into the fields he was glad, for then he thought he had escaped great danger; so he went forth at a venture, and stopped at a thick bush, to see what way he might take, for he knew not the ways, nor was he accustomed to travel on foot: and as he stood under the bush, he heard by chance a man speak as he came by, and it was a knight of his, called Sir Robert Mareschault, who had married his bastard daughter. The Earl knew him by his voice, and as he passed by he said—' Robert, are you thiere?' The knight, who knew the Earl by his speech,

said—‘ Ah, sir, I have been seeking for you this day in many places about Bruges: how did you get out?’ ‘ Let us go our way,’ quoth the Earl, ‘ it is not time to tell our adventures; I pray you let us endeavour to get a horse, for I am greatly fatigued with going on foot, and I pray you let us take the way to Lisle, if you know it.’ ‘ Yes, sir,’ replied the knight, ‘ I know it well;’ and so they travelled till the next morning without being able to get a horse; but they found a mare, which they took from a poor man in a village, and on which the Earl rode without saddle or pannel, and at night came to Lisle, where the greatest part of his knights had arrived who fled from the field, some on foot and some on horseback.”—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cxxxii.

Notwithstanding the orders which Froissart relates to have been given by Van Artevelde to take the Earl alive, and not do him any bodily harm, he says, in another place, that had he been taken his life would have been in danger. If any danger was to be apprehended, it was probably rather from the accidents of tumult and disorder than from any deliberate purpose to put him to death. About a century later the people of Ghent are thus spoken of by Commynes:—“ Apres le peuple du Liege, il n'en est nul plus inconstant que ceulx de Gand. Une chose ont ils assez honneste, selon leur mauvaistie: car à la personne de leur Prince ne toucherent jamais.”—Lib. ii., chap. iv.

PART I., ACT V., LAST SCENE, PAGE 257.

“ *As ye were brave, so be ye temperate now.*”

“ No people ever acted more mildly with their enemies than they of Ghent did with them of Bruges; for they did no injury to any man of the small crafts of the town, unless he was greatly accused. When Philip d'Arteville and the captains of Ghent saw

that they were lords of Bruges, and all was at their command, then they made proclamation that every man, on pain of death, should draw to his lodging, and not plunder, or make any disturbance, unless they were commanded.”—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cxxxii.

PART II., ACT I., SCENE I., PAGE 7.

“Enter the King with a hawk on his hand.”

The partiality of this boy-king for hawking, may be inferred from his dreams:—

“It happened while the King lay at Senlis, one night as he was asleep in bed, he had a vision. It seemed to him clearly that he was in the city of Arras, where he had never been before, and with him were all the most valiant men of France; and he thought that there came to him the Earl of Flanders, and presented him with a fine falcon pelerin; saying to him—‘Sir, I give you this falcon, as the best that ever I saw, for pursuing and destroying of fowls.’ Of this present the King thought he had great joy, and said—‘My dear cousin, I thank you.’ And therewith he thought he regarded the Constable of France, Sir Oliver Clisson, and said unto him,—‘Sir Oliver, let us two go into the fields to prove this excellent falcon that my cousin of Flanders hath given me.’ And then he thought the constable said to him—‘Sir, let us go when it pleases you.’ And so then he thought that they took their horses, they two alone, and went into the fields and found plenty of herons to pursue. Then the King said—‘Constable, let the falcon fly, and we shall see how she will pursue her game.’ Then the Constable cast off the falcon, and she mounted so high into the air that they could hardly see her; and the King thought that she proceeded directly towards Flanders. Then the King said—‘Let us ride after my

bird, I should be sorry to lose her.' And so he thought they rode after her till they came to a great marsh and a thick wood ; which being unable to pass on horseback, they alighted : and then he thought that servants came to them and took their horses. And so the King and the Constable entered into the wood with great difficulty, and travelled so long that they came to a fine piece of land ; and there the King thought he saw his falcon chasing herons, and fighting with them, and they with him ; and it appeared to the King that his falcon pursued the herons till at last he lost sight of her, wherewith he thought he felt much disappointed, seeing that he could not follow his hawk ; and he thought he said to the Constable—' Ah, I fear I shall lose my falcon, whereof I am sorry, and I have nothing to allure her back.' While in this difficulty, the King thought there appeared before him a great hart with wings, and inclined himself before him, whereof he had great joy, and thought he said to his Constable—' Remain here, sir, and I will mount on this hart, and so follow my falcon.' And so the King thought he mounted this flying hart, which, according to his desire, bore him over all the great woods and trees, and there he saw his falcon beating down a vast number of fowls ; and then it appeared to the King, when his falcon had destroyed many herons, that he called her, and the falcon immediately came and settled on his hand ; and then the hart flew again over the woods, and brought the King to the same land where the Constable tarried for him, who was very glad of his return : and as soon as he was alighted, he thought the hart departed, and then he never after saw him. And so there the King thought he told the Constable that the hart had borne him more easily than ever he had ridden before ; and also he thought he told him of the success of his falcon. And therewith it seemed to him that his servants came to them and brought them their horses, and they

mounted and took the highway, and so returned to Arras. And therewith the King awoke, and was much amazed at that vision, and he remembered every thing thereof perfectly well, and he shewed it to them of his chamber that were about him. And the figure of this hart pleased him so much, that all his imagination was set thereon. And this was one of the first circumstances that occasioned him when he went into Flanders to fight against the Flemings, to bear in his arms the flying hart.”—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cxxxvii.

PART II., ACT II., SCENE I., PAGE 39.

“ *We have been too successful to be safe
In standing still.*”

When Vespasian was so favourably situated that no one would believe him to be without designs upon the purple, Mucianus explained to him, in a few words, the dangers of moderation : “ *Abiit jam, et transvectum est tempus, quo posses videri concupisse : configiendum est ad imperium.*”—*Tac. Hist.* ii. 76. Machiavelli, who studied Tacitus for his philosophy as diligently as he consulted Livy for his facts, generalises the observation : “ *Ne possono gli uomini che hanno qualità eleggere lo starsi, quando bene lo ellegessino veramente, et senza alcuna ambitione ; perche non è loro creduto ; tal che se si vogliono star loro, non sono lasciati stare da altri.*”—*Discorsi*, iii. 2.

Hobbes would seem to have had this passage in his memory when he wrote as follows : “ Because there be some that taking pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest which they pursue farther than their security requires ; if others, that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds, should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able, long time, by standing only on their defence, to subsist.

And by consequence, such augmentation of dominion over men, being necessary to a man's conservation, it ought to be allowed him."—*Leviathan*, Part i. Ch. 13.

PART II., ACT II., SCENE II., PAGE 49.

" *The injury that disables is more wise
Than that which stings.*"

In the preceding note I have cited one instance in which Machiavelli has developed, in a general maxim, the philosophy with which Tacitus seldom fails to impregnate the speeches which he represents to have been delivered on particular occasions. I am here tempted to quote another example. When the Belgic provinces rose against Voclula, and placed him in such extremity that he was urgently counselled to flight, the view of the matter which was taken by that severe and intrepid commander is expressed in these words: " *Nunc hostes, quia molle servitium: cùm spoliati, exutique fuerint, amicos fore.*"—Machiavelli, in his exposition of the various means for retaining conquered and distant territories in obedience, makes a maxim of the same policy: " *Si ha à notare, che li uomini si debbono, ò vezzeggiare, ò spegnere; perche si vendicano delle leggieri offese, delle gravi non possono.*"—*Principe*, cap. iii.

PART II., ACT III., SCENE II., PAGE 89.

" *In his youth
Famed for his great desire of doing evil
He was elected into Testenoire's troop
Of free companions.*"

" Geoffrey Testenoire," says Froissart, " was a cruel man, and void of feeling, and would as soon kill a knight or squire as a villain."—Vol. ii. chap. clxxi. Testenoire, however, was in the

regular service of the English king, and it is perhaps doing him some injustice to represent him as the leader of a free company. Of the manner in which such a company was formed, and the qualifications required in its captain, the following is a lively account. The parties are certain English and Gascon auxiliaries of the king of Portugal, and their pay was in arrear:—“ then they began to speak, and make their complaints to each other ; and among them there was a knight, a bastard brother of the king of England, called Sir John Sounder, who was very bold in speaking, and said, ‘ The Earl of Cambridge hath brought us hither ; we are always ready to venture our lives for him, and yet he withholdeth our wages : I counsel, let us all be of one accord, and let us among ourselves raise up the banner of St. George, and be friends to God and enemies to all the world ; for unless we make ourselves feared, we shall get nothing.’—‘ By my faith,’ quoth Sir William Helman, ‘ you speak well, and so let us do.’ They all agreed with one voice, and so considered among themselves who should be their captain. Then they agreed that in this case *they could not have a better captain than Sir John Sounder, for he had then great desire to do evil, and they thought him more competent thereto than any other.*”—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cxxiv.

PART II., ACT III., SCENE III., PAGE 100.

“ *Pain and grief*

*Are transitory things no less than joy,
And though they leave us not the men we were,
Yet they do leave us. You behold me here
A man bereaved, with something of a blight
Upon the early blossoms of his life
And its first verdure, having not the less
A living root, and drawing from the earth*

*Its vital juices, from the air its powers:
And surely as man's health and strength are whole,
His appetites regerminate, his heart
Reopens, and his objects and desires
Shoot up renewed."*

The mixed state of feeling which is expressed or implied in this and other passages in the same scene, has been characteristically treated by South, in his comments upon "Sorrow for Sin." — "As Solomon says, 'in the midst of laughter the heart is sorrowful,' so in the midst of sorrow here, the heart may rejoice: for while it mourns, it reads, that those that mourn shall be comforted; and so while the penitent weeps with one eye, he views his deliverance with the other. But then for the external expressions and vent of sorrow, we know that there is a certain pleasure in weeping; it is the discharge of a big and swelling grief, of a full and strangling discontent; and therefore he that never had such a burthen upon his heart as to give him opportunity thus to ease it, has one pleasure in this world yet to come."

Reading this with the free mind and easy acceptation which should be brought to the perusal of what concerns the moral affections, no one can fail to understand what it means, and feel the truth as well as the liveliness of the remark. It may be worth while, however, to take the exception to it, to which it is logically liable, for the sake of the metaphysical proposition which it involves. If the matter be stated strictly, then, the admixture of better feelings with the sorrow can only be so far a recommendation, as the sorrow is thereby not so bad as it might be; but so far as the thing is taken as an individual entity and properly called a sorrow, it must be qualified by the term which belongs to the balance of its constituent feelings, and called painful. In a series of sensations whereof the first is

the *most* painful, and the rest follow in constantly mitigated succession, the first only may be as a pain, and the rest as pleasures, to the patient or sentient; *these* being felt as pleasures relatively to *that* the foregoing excess of pain; though all *absolute* pains, *i. e.* pains relatively to a state of indifference—all and singular of them substantive pains—all as comprehending that first excess in virtue of which only any pass for pleasures—each singularly taken, because, taken without relation to its antecedents, the object of comparison with each is of course a state of indifference. In the reversal of this order of succession, the feelings passing from less to more intense, instead of from more to less, is to be found the root of the distinction between the pains of sorrow and those of anxiety, and the cause of the preference to be given, *cæteris paribus*, to the former. Whilst I am upon such subjects I shall easily be excused for presenting the reader with another extract from South—an extract of so much as relates to joy and sorrow, from that writer's admirable description of the affections of man, such as they were before his fall from a state of innocence:—"In the next place for the lightsome passion of *Joy*. It was not that which now often usurps this name; that trivial, vanishing, superficial thing, that only gilds the apprehension, and plays upon the surface of the soul. It was not the mere crackling of thorns, a sudden blaze of the spirits, the exultation of a tickled fancy or a pleased appetite. Joy was then a masculine and a severe thing; the recreation of the judgment, the jubilee of reason. It was the result of a real good suitably applied. It commenced upon the solidities of truth, and the substance of fruition. It did not run out in voice, or undecent eruptions, but filled the soul, as God does the universe, silently and without noise. It was refreshing but composed; like the pleasantness of youth tempered with the gravity of age; or the mirth of a festival

managed with the silence of contemplation. And, on the other side, for *Sorrow*. Had any loss or disaster made but room for grief, it would have moved according to the severe allowances of prudence, and the proportions of the provocation. It would not have sallied out into complaint or loudness, nor spread itself upon the face, and writ sad stories upon the forehead. No wringing of the hands, knocking of the breast, or wishing oneself unborn ; all which are but the ceremonies of sorrow, the pomp and ostentation of an effeminate grief : which speak not so much the greatness of the misery, as the smallness of the mind. Tears may spoil the eyes but not wash away the affliction. Sighs may exhaust the man, but not eject the burthen. Sorrow *then* would have been as silent as thought, as severe as philosophy."

PART II., ACT IV., SCENE II., PAGE 132.

—“*and oh !*

*That constable ! oh, Oliver of Clisson !
That such a man as thou at such a time
Should hold the staff of constable of France.”*

I have represented sir Oliver of Clisson according to the impression which his conduct in this campaign certainly appears to be calculated to convey. I have made him pliant and irresolute. It should be observed, however, that the history of other wars in which he bore a most conspicuous part, ascribes to him no such weaknesses ; and to his character for vigour of one kind his soubriquet of ‘Oliver the Butcher’ bears testimony.

PART II., ACT V., SCENE III., PAGE 219.

*“Once in my sad and philosophic youth—
For very philosophic in my dawn
And twilight of intelligence was I—
Once at this cock-crow of philosophy,
Much tired with rest and with the stable earth,
I launched my little bark and put to sea,
Errant for geste and enterprize of wit
Through all this circumnavigable globe.”*

I have represented Van Artevelde, in this scene principally, and incidentally also elsewhere, as not forgetful of the studies of his earlier years ; and although such studies were not common in the age in which he lived, and though in every age, men but rarely carry such remembrances along with them after they have embarked in public life, yet the peculiar course of the life led by Van Artevelde, and the almost compulsory character of the exchange which he made of a meditative privacy for a military and political career, has appeared to me to render not unnatural the combination in his case, of thoughtfulness with the activity which his public station required of him. I revert to the subject here chiefly for the purpose of quoting a passage from Mr. Landor’s “Imaginary Conversations,” a work in my estimation more rich in thought, and brilliant in expression, than any that has been published of late years. “How many,” says Sir Philip Sidney, one of the imaginary collocutors, “How many, who have abandoned for public life the studies of philosophy and poetry, may be compared to brooks and rivers, which in the beginning of their course have assuaged our thirst, and have invited us to tranquillity by their bright resemblance of it, and which afterwards partake the nature of that vast body into which they run, its dreariness, its bitterness, its foams, its storms, its

everlasting noise and commotion ! I have known several such, and when I have innocently smiled at them, their countenances seemed to say,—‘ *I wish I could despise you : but alas ! I am a runaway slave, and from the best of mistresses to the worst of masters ; I serve at a tavern where every hour is dinner-time, and pick a bone upon a silver dish* ’’ I never recur to Mr. Landor’s volumes without renewed admiration of his abilities, nor without the wish that his writings could be cleared from the tone of uncalled-for defiance, and unnecessary self-assertion which lowers them.

PART II., ACT V., SCENE III., PAGE 232.

“ *A mother dothes upon the reckling child
More than the strong ; solicitous eares, sad watchings,
Rallies, reverses, all vicissitudes,
Give the affection exercise and growth.
So is it in the nursing a sick hope.* ”

This either is casually concurrent with the following passage in Madoc, or was unconsciously borrowed from it :—

“ Have I not nursed for two long wretched years
That miserable hope, which every day
Grew weaker, like a baby sick to death,
Yet dearer for its weakness day by day.”

PART II., ACT V., SCENE V., PAGE 246.

“ ELENA.

*I could not sleep, and sate without the tent,
And sudden from the river seemed to rise
A din of battle, mixed with lengthened shouts
That sounded hollow like a windy thaw.*

*I looked, and in the cloudy western sky
There was a glow of red, and then the cries
Were less confused, and I believed I heard
'Mount Joye, St. Denis!' 'Flanders and the Lion!'
With that I came to waken you.'*

I will extract here the picturesque and romantic passage in Froissart, upon which the above is founded :—

“ Thus when the Flemings were at rest in their lodgings, (howbeit they knew well their enemies were on the hill not more than a league from them), Philip D’Arteville, had brought a damsel with him out of Ghent ; and as Philip lay and slept on a couch, by the side of a little fire of coals in a pavilion, this said damsel, about midnight, went out of the pavilion to take the air, and to see what time it appeared to be, for she could not sleep ; she looked towards Rosebeque, and saw in the sky smoke and fire (it was the reflection of the fires the French made under hedges and bushes) ; this damsel hearkened, and thought she heard much noise between the two armies, and the French crying Mountjoy ! St. Denis ! and other cries ; and this she thought was on Mount Dorre, between there and Rosebecque ; of this thing she was much afraid, and so entered the pavilion, and suddenly awaked Philip, and said—‘ Sir, rise and arm yourself quickly, for I have heard a great noise on the Mount Dorre ; I believe it is the French coming to attack you.’ With these words he rose and cast on his gown, took his axe in his hand, and issued out of the pavilion to see what it was ; and he heard the same noise the damsel had told him of, and it seemed to him that there was a great tournament on the said hill : then he immediately entered his pavilion, and caused his trumpet to be blown, when every man rose and armed himself. They of the watch immediately sent to Philip D’Arteville, to know why he stirred

up the host, seeing there was no cause, for that they had sent to the enemy's host, and there was nothing stirring. ‘What then,’ said Philip, ‘was that noise on Mount Dorre?’ ‘Sir,’ said they, ‘we heard the same, and sent to know what it was, but they that went said that when they went they heard nor saw nothing; therefore, sir, we did not rouse the army, for we should have been blamed if we had done so without a cause.’ And when they of the watch had told Philip this, he appeased himself and all the host; but yet he was astonished at this phenomenon. Some said it was fiends of hell, who played there where the battle was to be the next day, for joy of the great prey they were likely to have there.”—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cl.

PART II., ACT V., SCENE XI., PAGE 263.

“ *Oh for a wound as wide as famine's mouth,
To make a soldier's passage for my soul!*”

“ So these men of arms pressed so closed upon the Flemings, that they could not defend themselves; so there were many that lost their strength and breath, and fell upon each other, and were pressed to death, without striking any stroke: and there was Philip d'Arteville wounded and beaten down among his men of Ghent; and when his page with his horse saw that his master was defeated, he departed and left his master, for he could not render him any assistance, and so rode to Courtray, on the way to Ghent. Thus when the battle was ended, they at last left the pursuit, and trumpets sounded the retreat. Then the king said to them that were about him, ‘Sirs, I wish to see Philip d'Arteville, whether he be alive or dead.’ They answered that they would do their best to gratify him. And then it was proclaimed through the host that whoever could find Philip d'Arteville, should have a hundred francs for his labour.

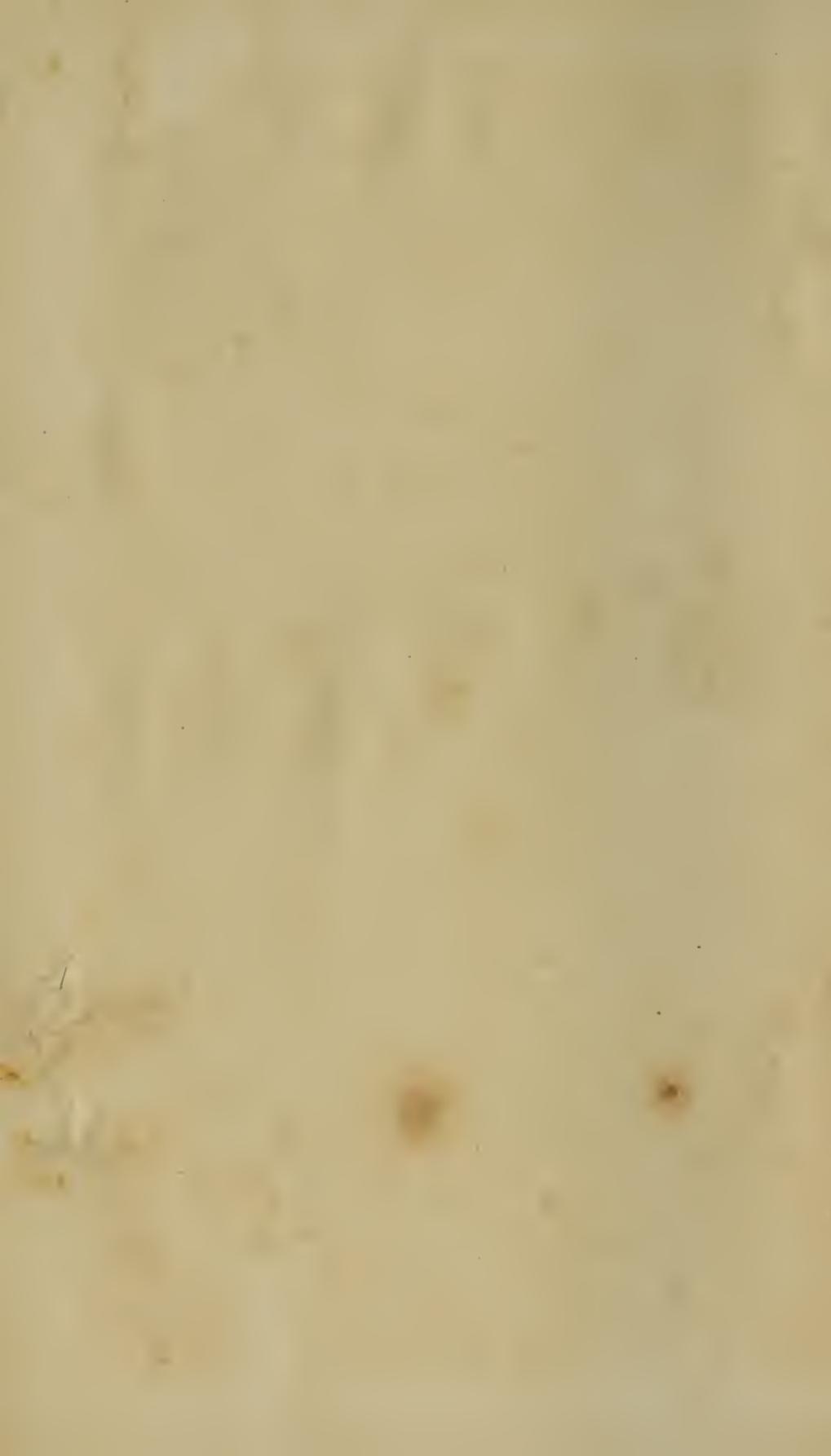
Then many went among the dead bodies, who were most all stripped of their clothes; at last there was such search made that he was found and known by a varlet who had served him long before, and he recognised him by many tokens; so he was brought before the king's pavilion, and the king and all the lords beheld him for some time; and the body was examined, to see what wounds he had, but they could see none that appeared to be mortal; but it was judged that he fell in a little dike, and many of them of Ghent upon him, and was so pressed to death.”
—*Froissart*, vol. ii., chap. cliii., cliv.

PART II., ACT V., SCENE LAST, PAGE 271.

“ *Wolf of the weald and yellow-footed kite,
Enough is left for you of meaner prey.*”

“ More bodies were left on the field for the yellow-footed kite and the eagle, and the grizzly wolf of the weald, than had fallen under the edge of the sword in any battle since the Angles and Saxons first came over the broad sea,” is the account given by an Anglo-Saxon poet, of the carnage at the battle of Brunnaburgh, A. D. 938. It is quoted by Mr. Southey, whose unequalled command of the materials which poetry supplies for the elucidation of history, is nowhere more apparent than in the work in which this quotation occurs, the Naval History of England.

LONDON :
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.
(LATE T. DAVISON.)

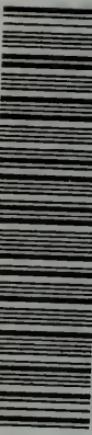


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